

THE RAMAYANA

Translated from the Original of Valmiki

A Modernised Version in English Prose

VOL I

[*Third Edition*]

BY

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INTRODUCTION

There is relation between the hours of life and the centuries of time, says the philosopher and we cannot get rid of the past even if we will. Thus even those who want to study the present-day mentality of modern India with her vast and complex social political and religious institutions, cannot do away with the history of her past, for a full and clear comprehension of the same.

Happily we are not here without a chart or compass. If we only take the trouble of looking to our great Epics—the life history of the ancient Hindus—we shall at once fall upon the trend of our national genius with all its limitations and greatness, which should not be overlooked in determining the course of national conduct. These great Epics embalm in their immortal pages the lives and accounts of those great national heroes, each of whom revealed a new potentiality of national life and added a fresh chapter to Indian glory.

This is in fact the true history of India. And rightly observes Prof. Max Muller "The true history of the world must always be the History of the few. We measure the Himalayas by the height of Mount Everest. We must take the true measure of India from the poets of the Veda, the sages of the Upanishads, the founders of the Vedanta and Sankhya philosophies and the authors of the oldest law books and not from the millions who are born and die in their villages, and who have never for one moment been roused out of their drowsy dream of life."

nt Hindus knew full well the elevating
 a great man They, therefore, not only
 our national heroes but extolled them into
 ere is something really noble in this excess
 il We are, in truth, idolaters of greatness.
 orn And what wonder is there if one
 o religious reverence for the character of a
 as an ideal king, an ideal son, an ideal man,
 ther, an ideal friend, a devoted husband, a
 her, and above all a lover of humanity and

ion be a striving after moral perfection,
 eau is undoubtedly right in maintaining that
 dea of ideal perfection present in our minds
 ly rise to the notion of an Absolute Perfect
 ards whom "a sentiment of habitual and
 admiration" is born In short, man always
 personal God, and sometimes even in flesh
 the place of which is often times supplied by
 of our Sastras And Sree Ram Chandra is
 ese great Avatars This much is for the
 view But if it is held that "the tense of
 is infinitely past," then we must call him a
 , for he can't be less than that, and the more
 of him is better for us We cannot escape
 hallowing influence of such a man. And it
 admitted that in the Ramayana itself, more
 been laid upon the Humanity than on the
 of Ram "Ecco Homo," as Professor Seeley

might say *Gods are gods, and we feel little interest for them if they do not share in our sorrows and joys.*

We think we should here enter into a timely protest against all learned and ingenious attempts to explain away the whole of Ramayana as a grand allegorical poem depicting the progress of Aryan cultivation and civilisation into the Deccan. There is indeed something fascinating about these interpretations, as in the seductive Dawn myth of Professor Max Muller in explaining away many mysterious Vedic phenomena. Yet to treat the whole of Ramayana as an agricultural poem is nothing but blasphemy pure and simple. To rely upon the derivative roots of Ram and Sita and to brush aside everything else is neither judicious nor sound.

The historical basis and the great antiquity of the Ramayana have more than amply been proved. It is too late now to attempt to establish the fact over again. The historic remains of Ram Chandra's time are the strongest proofs of its historical truth. No amount of theory can get over this. A simple tour from Ajodhya to Rameswaram will settle all doubts, yet if any formal authority of history is needed, we can do no better than refer to Col. Todd's immortal *Annals of Rajasthan* dealing with men sprung from Ram Chandra's loins. It is ridiculous to contend any more about its historical basis, though the outline is entirely lost in colour.

Still we maintain that to study our ancient institutions we must look to our Epics and Puranas than merely rely on foreign accounts, as, Hiouen Thsang's *Travels*, or McCrindle's *"India as described by Classical Authors."*

ul no doubt but do not go to the roots. gh food for patient research In the lf we find a high order of civilisation y side with some strange practices and of which are quite Vedic, while the rest origin There are also other things that lex a questioning reader, e g

he Rakshasas ? Some say, they are Non-ague term by itself) or the dark primitive dia whom the white Hindus conquered. avage people But the civilisation and it we find in Lanka, the capital of the uief, could not only vie with that of in some points were even superior to that capital How can we then reconcile these ictory things ? Have then all hedious n attributed to them out of sheer prejudice ecause they represented a different type of

But Ravana worshipped the Aryan God owed the same faith !

, who are the Vanaras ? Some say they are pes , while others, more scientific, are of they are Darwin's missing link, while the third hat they were the aborigines of the Deccan. ere not monkeys is quite evident They kingdoms, and other civil institutions, yet e tricks and other arborial habits have been uted to them ! But the devotion, loyalty, love of truth, high sense of morality and exhibit are rare not only in apes or missing

link, but even in our present civilised age. Thus every theory which we so readily pounce upon appears to be negatived by some incontrovertible facts !

Thirdly the occult power we find, shared in by some ascetics and Brahmanas is astounding but the metamorphic power of their curses is simply astonishing. Even some material objects surpass our power of comprehension. Some of the arms and weapons described in the Epic and the description of the Puspaka that steers through the sky like a modern aeroplane appear to be quite perplexing. What are they ? Are these the mere fabrications of a hyper sensitive eastern mind (yet where flourished Vedantas and the Upanishads) or there is some substratum of truth underneath them (where more is meant than meets the ear") is more than what we can say

As for the great antiquity of the poem we can only repeat what Professor Jacobi has said "The inner kernel of the Ramayana was composed much earlier than the Mahabharata though the former has subsequently been modified by some later poets"

Nay more, it had from time immemorial, invited many literary intruders to come with their countryside tales and weave them into the main texture of the poem—a fact which has rendered the original an arduous reading to most of the modern readers. And the Ramayana too, like most of the classics is now more admired than read. Yet we hope that, like the *Illiad* in ancient Greece, the Ramayana should be found under the

patriotic Hindu who still feels pride for achievements of his illustrious ancestors rendered the painful necessity of applying scissors in pruning down literary prolixity and verbosity in many places, where it has clogged the main narrative, or clouded the meaning, rendered the whole piece a tedious reading. We admit, but considering modern multifarious demands that are incessantly pressing on the time of a modern reader, we have expunged all verbosity and unnecessary digressions. As most of the modern readers have little spare time or energy to feel their way through a thicket of literary brambles Economy has been observed in every department of life,—even in literature. He has now so many things to read And we offer this as justification for the present publication.

Excuse, in no way means any disrespect to the

Time has adorned the stately mansion with flowers and other blossoms (the lovely evening hoary age) and the tributes of unknown poets have swelled the mighty current of Valmiki's Epic, to dilate upon the merits of the Ramayana as the words of Shakespeare, as useless as "to gild the sun with gold or to paint the lily" Yet to a modern reader many things might appear quite absurd and he may even be shocked by excessive hyper-supernatural elements of the Epic. But advances must be made for its hoary age and

the state of belief that characterised the society of that time. Literature of every age is tinged by its atmosphere. The Ramayana too was coloured by its environments. We are afraid that a modern reader will not feel much enthusiastic about the literary charms of the Ramayana specially through the medium of a translation. We have therefore, tried to be brief and simple instead of conforming to the exacting demands of a learned critic. But we have not left out a single incident with its mental and physical accompaniments that finds its place in the original. Such cuts that hurt popular sentiments are improper if not impertinent. We are however guilty of no such offence, though sometimes we have taken the liberty of condensing unnecessary details and many country-side tales, and redundant anecdotes into a close compact.

In short, the present translation is a modernised version of the original. But we have omitted nothing which may be missed, though we have tried our best to adapt it to modern taste. And for this, we have tried to be faithful more to the spirit than to the form of the original. Some latitudes in translating such a work are inevitable. Thus, where we thought that word per word translation would render the whole thing unreadable, we have taken the liberty of a free translation there. To have a host of adjectives attached to every noun in a monstrously long sentence is anything but agreeable to modern taste and we make no secret of doing away a lot of them which could be done without altering the sense in any manner. In some cases, alterations were necessary in the structure of sentences

ience of words There has also been a
 e of articles We have thus attempted
 way to present the book in a simple,
 pecially to enable those who are ignorant
 e how the thing has been treated in the

s more are necessary to indicate the line
 on Of the two famous recensions of the
 iares recension is more poetic than the
 l we have followed the Benares recension
 ough here and there we have taken the
 gal text

ot excluded the Uttarakanda which in all
 ears to be a later addition by some other
 s the main story properly ends in the Sixth
 ions of cantos differ in different readings,
 e condensed sometimes different cantos
 ive thought it more advisable to divide the
 ters than into cantos Important historical
 ical or literary references have been given
 places

h our literary limitations, we cannot but
 in presenting such a book in our poor
 public—a book that has loomed large for
 r the destinies of millions of people, and
 to do so for ages to come And for our
 ntire we bow down to the spirit of
 miki, the jewel prints of whose hallowed
 dared to follow

MAKHAN LAL SEN

INVOCATION

Glory be unto Valmiki the First of Poets
and the Inventor of Verse, whose welling pity
for a poor bird transformed itself into gushing
Poetry and whose divine lyre has given us
the deathless lay of Rama that absolves one
from sin !

Where is the man who has listened to his
immortal song but has not felt its enthralling
charms or does not feel elevated or purified
by the sacred lay ?

Glory to him "the Morning-Star of Songs,"
whose fame has overstepped the limits of
Time and Space. May we, by his grace,
follow the jewel prints of his hallowed feet.

(Translator's humble tribute)

THE RAMAYAN

CHAPTER I

VALMIKI AND NARADA

The great sage Valmiki asked Narada the foremost of the saints, versed in the Vedas, 'Tell me, O Saint I who is, at present, the most accomplished, learned, powerful, noble-minded, truthful, firm in vows, of excellent moral character and of greatful turn of mind? Who ministers to the good of every creature? Who is well familiar with manners and customs of men? Who is peerless, clever and beautiful to look at? Who is not subject to anger or malice yet whom when enraged even the gods fear to face in the battle? Whose prowess can protect the world from evil? On whom Fortune has emptied her choicest blessings? Who is the best of kings, and can justly be compared with Indra the king of heaven? O Sage I You alone know who is so qualified on earth Great is my curiosity to hear

e great saint Narada, cognisant of the three
 rfully said, "O hermit ! The great qualities
 ntioned by you, are rarely to be found in
 ortal's Let me, however, remember and tell
 such a qualified person on earth "

, a famous king by the name of Ram, born in
 great Ikshwaku. He is of subdued sense and
 ing might He has mighty arms reaching to
 His throat is marked with three auspicious
 l lines He has high and broad shoulders,
 , well-formed head, graceful forehead, strong-
 nd deeply embedded collar bones His eyes
 and his colour is of soft lustrous green He is
 o tall, nor very short, but well formed and of
 cal limbs This highly beautiful and mighty
 upremely intelligent, and of eloquent speech
 ight, true to his vows, modest and observer of
 his character is highly pure He is famous, wise
 asses the knowledge of self He is the protector
 ofender of religion and caste-system He is the
 r of his kinsmen and friends He is like
 i himself He is the supporter of all, and the
 r of his enemies He always gives shelter to
 ted followers He is deeply versed in Vedas
 dangas He is highly skilled in archery, and
 ur is admitted by his dying foes He has great
 e He is a genius, and possesses excellent
 y and is profoundly learned in all the sacred
 He is wise, compassionate and valiant Every

one is fond of him. As the ocean is served by the rivers, he is always attended by all good men. He meets out equal treatment to his friends and foes. This Ram is born of Kousalya's womb and is honoured by all. In gravity he is like the sea, in fortitude like the Himalayas, in might like Vishnu, in beauty like the moon, in forbearance, like the earth, in anger like the doomsday fire, in bounty like Kuvera, the giver of wealth, in devotion to truth like Dharma or Religion himself."

King Dasarath for the satisfaction of all people wished to confer the crown on Ram. Finding Ram about to be installed on the throne queen Kaikeyi who had been previously promised boons by Dasarath asked for the exile of Ram. On the installation of her son Bharat on the throne by his promise, the truthful Dasarath sent his dear son Ram to the forest. And Ram for the sake of his father's promise and for Kaikeyi's sake went into voluntary exile. Sumitra's son Anshuman, dear to Ram followed him into the forest out of brotherly love.

Then exceedingly beautiful Sita, daughter of all auspicious signs, born in the city of Ayodhya, of women who is like the full moon, in grace—Ramchandra's darling, more precious than his life, went after her. Hanuman, the Monkey, Rohini follows the Moon.

the citizens in great sorrow followed them to a great distance

After some time, Ram reached the city of Srīngaver on the banks of the holy Ganges, where he dismissed his charioteer Sumantra, and met Guha, the king of the Nishadas thence, after crossing deep rivers, Ram along with Sita and Lakshman entered the forest and came to the hermitage of Bharadwaj, following Bharadwaj's directions, Ram arrived at the Chaitrakuta mountain where he raised a beautiful hut and passed his days in joy. The Chitrakuta grew bright with the presence of the illustrious three

When Ram left for the woods, King Dasarath died broken-hearted, bitterly lamenting the absence of Ram. After his death, Vasistha and other Brahmanas requested Bharat to ascend the throne, which Bharat stoutly refused. Bharat then went to the forest to meet worshipful Ram. Bharata fell to the feet of Ram and entreated him to come back, saying, "Oh Aryya! in presence of the elder brother it is not proper for the younger brother to usurp the throne. You know this custom very well, so come back and rule your kingdom." Generous Ram was pleased with Bharat's words, but he preferred to abide by his father's decree and refused to return to his kingdom. He made over his sandals as his substitute at Bharat's insistence and induced him to go back. Then, Bharata finding that all his prayers

were in vain returned to Nandigram after profoundly bowing at Ram's feet. Bharat left Ayodhya in sorrow and disgust. He placed the sandals as Ram's substitute on the throne and began to rule from Nandigram as Ram's deputy eagerly expecting the return of Ram.

After Bharat's departure fearing that others might intrude upon his seclusion Ram left Chitrakuta and entered the mighty forest of Dandaka. The lotus-eyed Ram after slaying a Rakshasa named Viradha in that forest saw Maharshi Sharabhangas Sutikishna Agastya and Agastya's brother Idhma vaha

Then, according to Agastya's instructions he secured the bow sword and the inexhaustible quiver of Indra.

While Ram was living in the Dandaka forest ascetics and hermits came to him for the destruction of Ashuras and Rakshasas and Ram readily agreed to their proposal.

Then one day he cut the ear and nose of Surpanakha a denizen of Janasthan who could assume different forms at will. Then the Rakshasas of the place being incited by Surpanakha challenged Ram Chandra in a battle whereupon Ram slew Rakshasas, Khar Trishira and Dushan with their host. About fourteen thousand Rakshasas were killed during his stay in Dandaka. Then Ravana, the king of the Rakshasas, hearing of the destruction of his kinsmen

flew into rage and asked a Rakshasa called Maricha to come to his rescue. Finding Ravana about to launch into an audacious venture, Maricha entreated Ravana to desist from it, and said, "Oh king ! It would not be to your benefit to enter into hostilities with mighty Ram." But Ravana, urged by fate, scorned at Maricha's words and repaired to Rama's place taking Maricha with him. Ram and Lakshman were drawn away from Sita by Maricha's wiles and Ravana carried off Sita by force. He slew the vulture, Jatayu, that obstructed him in the way. When Ram came back, he found Jatayu slain and Sita stolen. He greatly bewailed for Sita and then set out in quest of her, after cremating Jatayu in deep sorrow. While searching for Sita, Ram came across a horrible Rakshasa called Kabandha. After slaying Kabandha, Ram burnt his body. Then Kabandha rose from the lame to the funeral pyre in the beautiful form of a Gandharva and addressing Ram said, "Oh Ram ! Go to saintly Sabari and seek her advice." Ram then went to Sabari and according to her advice, he came to the banks of the beautiful Pompa Lake, where he met Hanuman, the Wind God's son. Acting on Hanuman's words, Ram went to Sugriva, the chief of the Vanaras or monkeys, and told him everything concerning the sad history of Sita. Hearing the tale of sorrow, Sugriva vowed friendship with Ram in the presence of sacred fire. Then on Ram's enquiry about the cause of Sugriva's hostilities with

his brother Vali. Sugriva narrated everything with a sigh. Hearing all, Ram promised, to dispel Sugriva's fear by killing Vali. Sugriva who described the great prowess of Vali entertained great doubts about Ram's capacity and pointed out the huge corpse of the giant Dundhuvī slain by Vali. Ram looked at the prostrate corpse huge as a mountain, and with a smile threw the body hundred leagues away by a gentle push of his toe. To convince Sugriva Ram sent a shaft which after piercing seven palms in a line and a rock, reached Rasatal or the Nether world. After witnessing these wonderful feats of strength with his own eyes, Sugriva with a content¹ mind accompanied Ram to Kiskindhya. After reaching Kiskindhya Sugriva of brownish yellow colour like that of gold began to make terrific shouts. Hearing those shouts Vali the lord of the monkeys, after taking Tara's permission came out and met Sugriva when at the instance of Sugriva Ram killed Vali with one deadly shaft and gave Vali's kingdom to Sugriva. Then grateful Sugriva summoned the monkeys and sent them in various directions in search of Janaka's daughter.

Then Hanuman at the advice of bird Sampati crossed hundred leagues of the saltish sea and arrived at Lanka the well guarded city of Ravana. There he found Sita in the Asoka forest, pensive and sad. Hanuman then delivered Ram's message, and showed her a token from Ram. He told her all about the

THE RAMAYAN

the friendship between Ram and Sugriva, and rescued hapless Sita with messages of hope. He then smashed down the gate of the forest, then slew five captains, seven counsellors' Ravana's son, Aksha. He was then bound nad. Knowing that he would be soon set a boon of Brahma, the grandsire of all created suffered himself to be carried to Ravana's. He then set fire to the whole of Lanka, the Asoka forest, and afterwards came back ka.

the mighty Hanuman appeared before Ram and ing round him as a mark of profound res- id, "My Lord, I have really seen Janaki" his from Hanuman's lips, Ram followed by epaired to the sea shore and smote the Ocean n shafts bright as the Sun's rays. Then the e Ocean quickly appeared before Ram, and g to the Ocean's advice, with the help of Nala, lt a bridge over the sea.

at bridge Ram went to Lanka, slew Ravana overed Sita. But thinking of Sita's long ent in Ravana's place, Ram was stung with and he used some harsh expressions towards he presence of all. Then chaste Sita, being o bear the insult any more, cast herself into hereupon god Agni appeared with Sita and Ram about Sita's stainless character. Thereupon mbling with joy embraced his wife. Then the

gods showered praises and blessings on Ram for his mighty deeds.

Ram then installed the best of the Rakshasas, Bibhisan on the throne and revived his fallen monkey-soldiers by a divine boon. After this Ram and Sita surrounded by friends and followers set out for Ayodhya in the heavenly chariot called Puspaka through the clouds. On reaching the hermitage of Bharadwaj Ram sent Hanuman to Bharat and accompanied by Sugriva Ram then started for Nandigram in the puspaka. Arriving at Nandigram Ram met his loyal brother and cut down his matted locks. Thus after regaining Sita, Ram got back his own kingdom. Thus, Dasarath's son, noble Ram now rules over his people who have grown happy and prosperous in his reign. During his reign his subjects will not suffer from any disease or mental disquietitude. They will have no fear of hunger or of thieves. Cities and villages will be full of corns and wealth and the people will live as happily as in the Golden Age. No fire or flood will devastate the land, and women will ever

THE RAMAYAN

will repair to the Brahmaloaka or the high

ver will read this noble tale of Ram's
cred as the Vedas, will be free from all sins
l attain heavenly bliss with his kins If a
1 reads it, he will attain excellence in speech,
attriya does it he will lord it over all, if a
reads it, he will get abundance of wealth
le, and a Sudra will attain greatness by
g to the tale

CHAPTER II

THE BIRTH OF POETRY

aving heard with admiration the words of Divine
da, pious Valmiki with his pupils made due
ance to him Being thus honoured by Valmiki,
da, after the expression of good wishes and with
ormer's leave, left for the heavenly regions

Then, after a short stay in the hermitage, Valmiki
e to the banks of the Tamasa, not far from the
getic stream On arriving there and finding the
k of the river free from mud, Valmiki addressing
pupil Bharadwaj, standing by his side, said, "Look

Bharadwaj ! How beautiful is this spot free from all stains of dirt. Its glassy stream is transparent like the hearts of pious men. Now put down your pitcher and give me my bark. I shall bathe in this sacred stream.

Obedient Bharadwaj thus being asked presented the bark without delay. After taking the bark from his pupil's hand, Valmiki strayed about surveying the deep, extensive forest.

At the skirts of the forest Valmiki saw a pair of healthy kraunchas dallying in amorous sports and singing in melodious notes. At this moment suddenly a wicked fowler appeared and killed the male bird, without any provocation whatsoever. Then the hen finding its mate thus slain and rolling in the dust besmeared with blood raised piteous cries of despair at the prospect of her separation from her copper-crested, amorous companion of fluttering wings. Seeing the bird thus brought down in the very act of love Valmiki was overwhelmed with grief. His heart melted at the piteous notes of the female bird and considering it to be a highly unrighteous act his indignation broke forth —

now uttered being afflicted with grief
?"

Dressing Bharadwaj, the sage said, "These
just now uttered are of equal feet and
measure, and are capable of being sung in
tune to a stringed lyre. And since it is
Shoka (grief) let it be known as a Sloka

When the great sage had thus spoken,
Bharadwaj gladly agreed to his master's
Valmiki felt gratified within

Valmiki after bathing in the Tamasa and
; ablutions in the stream, returned to his
pondering all the way over the incidents
se, and his disciple Bharadwaj followed him
her brimful of water

; reached the hermitage Valmiki took his
revolved in his mind all things about the
hich came so spontaneously to his lips)

the four-faced god, glorious Brahma, the
Heavens and Earth, appeared before Val-
soon as the holy saint saw Brahma before
ose from his seat in reverence and stood be-
with folded hands and bent head in profound

Valmiki offered the god water to wash
with and other things of reception. After
s seat, the Holy one enquired after Valmiki's
and asked him to resume his seat. Valmiki
his seat before the Sire of all created things,
and still revolved over the incidents of the

Sloka Valmiki thought about the sad fate of the bird and while thus absorbed in thought he quite automatically repeated the Verse in grief "O wicked fowler! Thou shalt never attain fame for killing the tuneful Krauncha while dallying in amorous sports."

Then Brahma spoke in joy "O thou best of the hermits, see thou hast unconsciously made a Verse. It was done at my instance. Now the work should no longer be delayed. Those Verses of yours shall be immortal and I ask you, O thou Best of the Saints, to celebrate the life of Ram in your Verse. Relate the sacred story as you have heard it from Narad about pious and intelligent Ram Lakshman and Vaidehi and about the Rakshashas, including all that is hitherto known or unknown. Even what has been omitted by Narad, will come to your pen at the time of writing and no words of yours should contain any untruth. So long as the mountains and the seas exist on earth the sacred history of Ramayan shall endure, and you will enjoy a double life both in Heaven and on Earth

Having said this the worshipful Brahma disappeared and Valmiki's pupils began to chant the Verse, and the more they sang, the more their wonder grew

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT THEME

That Valmiki having heard the sacred story from celestial Narada, wanted to get an insight into the history. He then sat on a bed of grass in the forest and after making due ablutions with water, concentrating his mind in yoga, he plunged deep into the subject. Then, through his yoga, the story became distinct to his mental eyes. He saw Ram, Lakshman, Sita, and Dasarath and their counsellors talking, laughing and doing all sorts of things, as if in real life. He could then see as clearly as he could see a myrobalan in his hand what hardships and sufferings Ram, Lakshman and Sita underwent in their wanderings in the forests. Having thus learnt everything by direct vision, great Valmiki began to compose his enchanting story of Ram, formerly told by Narada, which is new to all men's ears and in worth is like a sea of

Valmiki then repeated the story over again, telling of Ram's birth, his prowess, his generosity, his valour, his truthfulness, his fortitude, his goodness, his popularity, Ram's talks with the great sage Vishwamitra, the formidable bow, his marriage

with Janaki his encounter with Parashuram
 his installation on the throne Kaikeyi's malice
 Ram's exile, Dasarath's grief and sorrow of the
 people. Ram's meeting with Guha his interview
 with Bharadwaj his arrival at the Chitrakuta
 Bharat's entreaties Ram's offering of oblations to
 his departed father giving of the sandals Bharat's
 removal to Nandigram Ram's entry into the Dandaka
 forest destruction of Viradha his interview with
 Sharabhanga and Sutikshna Sita's companionship
 with Anusuya Ram's meeting with Agastya his
 obtaining arms from Indra Surpanakha's disfigurement
 destruction of Khara and Trisira death of Maricha
 carrying away of Sita Ram's lamentations the
 sight of the Pampa lake his friendship with Savari
 his meeting with Hanuman friendship with Sugriva
 destruction of Vali installation of Sugriva Tara's
 grief collection of troops the despatch of
 envoys Hanuman's meeting with Sampati Hanuman's
 crossing the sea his sight of Lanka his entry
 by night his sight of Ravana's palace and of
 Ravana Hanuman's interview with Sita in the
 Asoka forest presentation of Ram's ring to Sita
 Sita's handing a gem to Ram through Hanuman

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recovery of Sita ; ordeal of Sita , Ram's Ayodhya in Puspaka , meeting with despatch of Hanuman to Bharat , meeting Ram's installation to the throne , dismissal of Ravana , Ram's rule , his administration and the end of Sita, and everything else that happened in the Ramayana has been treated by the revered sage

CHAPTE IV.

THE SONG

Ram got back his kingdom Valmiki composed a beautiful poem consisting of twenty-four thousand verses. Having composed the poem, Valmiki thought of communicating it to the world. When thinking about the means of its publication one day he came in Kusa and Lava, two royal princes, who were in a hermit's dress and touched his feet. Valmiki, seeing these two brothers pure in character, endowed with a sweet voice and good memory and capable of composing Poetry, taught them to interpret the Ramayana along with it the whole of Ramayan dealing with the destruction of Ravan and of Sita's life in full. These two brothers were beautiful like Gandharvas and exceedingly sweet-voiced. They mastered all the notes of music. They looked like Ram, as his shadows. Then the two brothers, Kusa and

Lava learnt by rote the entire song of Ramayan with all the involutions of tone melody measure and time, suggesting various emotions as pity anger heroism love and sorrow. One day Kusa and Lava bearing all auspicious marks on their beautiful persons began to chant the great song in an assembly of pure minded hermits, and when they heard the song the pious ascetics were seized with delightful surprise and began to bless the boys again and again. Some in their admiration for Kusa and Lava said, "O how sweet is the music! how charming is the verse! all the exploits of Ram happened long long ago but they seem to be re-acted before our eyes.

Then to the delight and admiration of the assembly Kusa and Lava began to sing in sevenfold notes of music, and the ascetics became loud in their praises as they heard the song. Then, some one in ecstasy stood up and presented to Kusa and Lava a pitcher some one in delight gave them a bark another a dark deer skin some presented sacred threads some Kamandulu some, a twisted manju some, the seat of an ascetic some, a loin-cloth. One gave them an axe one a piece of red cloth one a rope to tie their

inspiration to all later poets, and you have sung the thing, pleasing both to the ear and heart, conferring longevity and prosperity on all who hear it."

Sa and Lava gained reputation and praise by their songs and musical performance.

On this occasion, these sweet singers were seen by the king of Ayodhya. Ram then brought them with him. When they came, Ram was seated on a throne of gold. His brothers stood by him, and other retainers surrounded the king. Beholding them, Ram said to Lakshman:

"Listen to the story composed in excellent metre and fraught with lofty thoughts and deep

sense. The singers began to sing in clear melodious tones, raising their sweet voices to high pitch, rivalling the sound of Vina. And that song of theirs moved them to ecstasy. Then high-souled Ram remarked, "These minstrels, though they look like ascetics, yet they bear on their persons the signs of royalty, and the song glorifies my deeds which will perpetuate my history."

CHAPTER V

AYODHYA

The Ramayan treats of the history of the victorious sons of Ikshwaku who ruled through countless years from the days of Manu.

In this line King Sagara was born who dug the sea and whom sixty thousand proud sons followed in march

We two shall recite the noble song at length.
Now listen to the story with delight

On the banks of the Saraju lies extended the great kingdom of Kosala, rich in corns and gold where the people pass their days in happiness and peace. And famous Ayodhya is its capital. In bygone days, the city was built by Manu, the ruler of men

It is twelve (leagues) yojanas in length and three in breadth. It is the fairest city on earth, and is beautified with squares and palaces. It is well watered, its spacious roads are sprinkled with full blown flowers, and are lined with shops and stalls. Its gates

e to all There are gardens, theatres for
and mango groves in the city Merchants and
in various countries have come to live in
or trade

are seven storied houses, elephants, horses
ots constantly ply along its streets—a rich
and comparison In every street are heard
lute, drum, tabor, flute, chanting of the Vedas,
ing of archer's bow Wise and learned
live in the city

CHAPTER VI

KING DASHARATH

in this city, once reigned king Dasharath
, the Ruler of Heaven, commanding all royal
and under his rule people were happy,
and prosperous All men and women were
at character None of them was atheistical
thful or illiterate No man or woman was
grace The city abounded in spirited horses
bhøj, Vahlika, Vanayu and Sindhu, and in
hants from the Vindhya mountain and the
s The Kshatriyas obeyed the Brahmans, the
were respectful towards the Kshatriyas, and
erved by the Sudras

CHAPTER VII

COUNSELLORS

King Dasharatha had two priests, saintly Vasutha faithful to advise, and Vamdeva versed in the Vedas and sacred lore. He had other counsellors, viz. Suyajna Javali Kashyapa Gautama long lived Markandeya and Katyayana.

King Dasharatha had eight ministers famous for their sagacity and devotion and their names were Dhrishti Vijaya Surashtra Rashtravardhan Akopa Dharmapala and Sumantra. Peace reigned in cities and provinces. They could keep their counsels, judge of things, were well-trained in the arts of administration and policy. Surrounded by these wise counsellors, Dasharatha ruled the earth, gathering informations by means of spies, and protecting the people by his might. He never met a foe who was either his equal or superior.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMANTRA'S ADVICE

High souled Dasharath, having no issue, pined for the birth of a son to perpetuate his line. Once, it came into his mind, "Why do I not celebrate a sacrifice for (obtaining) a son?" He then, with the advice of his counsellors decided to perform Aswamedha sacrifice and called together his spiritual guides Rishis at their head.

Brahmans approved of the king's intention and said to him, "O king, since with the object of obtaining offspring thou hast decided so nobly, you will have many sons after your mind."

Then the king replied, "Do (then) procure the sacrificial articles, according to the instructions of my spiritual preceptors, and let loose a horse guarded by a competent person, and one of the principal priests prepare the sacrificial ground on the bank of the Saraju. The ceremony cannot be performed by every king. Particular care should be taken that it may not be defective on account of omission. The Brahmins then embraced the king and retired with his permission. Hearing all this of the sacrifice, the King's charioteer Sumantra related to him a story of old which I have myself heard. The Saint Sanat Kumar foretold how in your line a son would be born. The seer said,

"Kashyapa has a son named Vibhandaka and he will get a son called Rishyastanga. He will be brought up with wood land deer and will pass his days in the woods and will know nothing except following the behests of his father. It is said Oh king that he will practise two modes of Brahmacharya and spend some time by the sacrificial fire. By this time a king called Lomapada will sit on the throne of Anga. But for the king's sin plague and drought will visit the land and the king will ask the priests to find out some remedy for it. The Brahmanas then will advise him to bring Vibhandaka's son by any means and to bestow his daughter Santa with due honours on him. Hearing this the king will ask his priests and courtizans to bring Rishyastanga to him. But they will beg to be excused from fear of Vibhandaka. Then they will devise many crafty plots. Then it will be planned that young damsels expert in all sorts of blandishments will be sent attired in hermit's dress to beguile the holy hermit with amorous wiles and the unsuspecting youth seduced by them will leave his father's cottage. Then when Rishyastanga will leave his peaceful retreat and come to the city the troubles of the king will come to an end and Rishyastanga will be married to Santa. Now I have related what Sanat Kumar had communicated before."

CHAPTER IX.

RISHYASRINGA

ed by the King, Sumantra replied, "The
to Lompada, "Rishyasringa has been brought
oods and is engaged in religious austerities
ignorant of woman and sensual pleasures
re, most beautiful girls be sent to him and
duce him hither "

e courtiers acted according to the instruc-
priests and sent fascinating courtezans to
and they stopped at some distance from the

ened, however, that one day, Bibhandaka's
ever strayed from his father's retreat, while
out leisurely came to that spot and beheld
; beauties

o allure the youthful hermit, the bright
with their scented tresses tied with floral
gan to sing and dance and feigned all amo-
The whole forest became reverberated
music, anklets' silvery chime, and sweet
25

inga gazed on them in wild surprise, and
herto unfelt strong impulse in him They
amazed look and the girls came near to him

"Whose son art thou? Why do you live alone in this wood? We are eager to know the truth.

The young ascetic's eyes glistened upon their lovely forms. A strange longing rose in his mind and he replied

"My father is holy Kasyapa's son Vibhandaka and I am called Rishyasringa. Our hermitage is close-by. Please come to our cottage. I welcome you gentle beauties.

They then gladly went to his cottage and Rishyasringa received them most warmly. He gave them water to wash their feet with and offered them fruits and roots to eat.

The damsels then broke forth with a merry laugh. "We too have dainty fruits in store. Please taste the produce of our forest."

Then they gave him many luscious things, looking like fruits. Then the laughing damsels threw their arms round his neck and whispered in his ears heavy tales of love while their sumptuous breasts and delicate limbs pressed against the youthful hermit.

Then the wily girls took a hasty leave saying that they were afraid of his ascetic father. When they were gone Rishyasringa felt a great void.

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those wily girls saw Vibhandaka's son, they
ard and said, "O Brahman ! come to our
ere are various fruits and roots which you
o your heart's content "

ringa felt tempted and he was thus
l, and brought over by the wily women As
hyasringa was brought, Indra poured forth
howers enlivening the earth and the spirits
The King received him with due honours
erred on him his daughter Santa Thus
by the King, Rishyasringa passed his days
with his beloved wife Santa

CHAPTER X.

THE INVITATION

1, O foremost of monarchs, I shall tell what
umar, the best of gods, has said" Thus
Sumantra "In Ikshaku's line there will be
pious king named Dasharath, beautiful in
ce and true to his vows He will be a friend
g of Angas who will have a virtuous daughter
nta At one time, the famous King Dasharath
r to him and thus speak to him O noble one !
ithout any issue and I wish to perform a

sacrifice for it. Let Santa's husband take charge of that sacrifice. Please request him for it.

Hearing this, Lompada after thinking over the matter will make over Rishyasringa with his wife and children for the intended ceremony. After bringing Rishyasringa, King Dasarath glad to heart will make preparations for the sacrifice and with supplicating prayer will invite the best of Brahmana to conduct the ceremony. And from that Putreshti sacrifice four sons of great prowess will be born unto him."

"Thus has prophesied Sanat Kumar. Therefore O mighty King bring here Rishyasringa with due honours.

Dasharath was exceedingly delighted at these words of Sumantra. Dasharath then looked to Vasistha for advice, who gave his glad consent to Sumantra's words.

Then Dasharath with his queens and courtiers went to Angas where he was warmly received by his friend, Lompada the King of Angas. Lompada then introduced Dasharath to Rishyasringa who hearing of the intimate friendship between the two, received the former with warm hospitality.

Dasharath stopped at Angas for seven or eight days. Then, after stating the object of his visit

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and Rishyasringa readily consented to his
law's proposal

Dasarath and Lompada clasped each other's
embraced each other in joy After this
set out for Ayodhya with Rishyasringa, the
of Brahmans, and sent a messenger for a
bration "Let the whole city be decorated,
perfumed with sweet incense, let the streets
adorned and let gay banners flutter in the air"

The people awaited his return in eager joy, and
the King entered the city with Rishyasringa
company the whole city welcomed him with
of conch shells and drums

The King then took him inside his palace and
him due honours with rites of hospitality
in consequence of Rishyasringa's presence, the King
that his object had been gained And the
the palace were all pleased at the sight of
the King Thus honoured by all, Rishyasringa
the two passed their days

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE EVE OF THE SACRIFICE

At some time, when the sweet vernal season
King Dasarath thought of performing his
Dasarath then came to Rishyasringa and

after bowing to the saint he invited him to conduct the ceremony for getting sons to perpetuate his line.

The Brahman said to the king Let it be so. Order for necessary provisions loose the horse and prepare the sacrificial ground on the north bank of the Sarayu." Thereafter King Dasarath addressing Sumantra said "O Sumantra summon Brahmans and priests versed in the Vedas and Vadangas Suyajna Vamdeva Javali Kashyapa and the priest Vasistha Thereupon Sumantra bestirred himself and summoned all those versed in the Vedas When they came Dasarath after showing due honours to them said

Having no son I have no happiness in life Hence I intend to perform an Aswamedha sacrifice and by the blessings of holy Rishyastanga I am sure I shall gain my object. The Brahmans fully agreed to his words. The King was greatly delighted at their approval and he cheerfully asked his men to make preparations for the sacrifice in accordance with the directions of the Brahmans. Then the Brahmans blessed him saying May your desire be crowned with success.

Dasharath then bowed to them in profound respect and hurried to meet his queens. And when they heard about the possibility of sons, their lotus like faces brightened in joy as lilies at the end of the frost.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT PREPARATION

When the spring appeared after a year, the king, for the birth of sons, resolved to perform without further delay. He then addressed, said,

Friend Sir, Please make all preparations according to the injunctions of the Sastras. There may not be any impediment to it. You are my friend and guide. You will have to take care of the sacrifice."

He replied, "I shall do as you desire."

Yasistha summoned Brahmans well-versed in all things, wise, and aged people, architects, painters, carpenters, diggers, astrologers, artists, musicians, learned and good charactered people for the sacrifice of King Dasarath. He ordered to be built by thousands and thousands and raised a palace for the accommodation of kings and ordered to furnish it with various kinds of food and then to build thousands of sheds for the king and replenish them with food and drink. He directed to construct separate quarters for the princes coming from distant places,

quarters for citizens, soldiers and foreigners, with accommodation for every one and also to build stalls for horses and elephants. Many

poor and low class people are expected to attend the sacrifice beautiful huts should be raised for them. And whatever you may give to them you must give it with proper modesty so that they may think themselves respectfully entertained. Don't neglect or despise any one through greed or fits of temper. Those labourers and artisans who will remain engaged in the sacrificial work should also be treated with kindness for those who work for wages if they receive beyond their expectations accomplish their work satisfactorily and leave nothing unfinished or illdone. So act with discretion and kindness.

Thus Vasistha concluded. Thereupon one came forward and said "We have done everything according to your instructions and nothing has been left undone and what you now say will be carried out to the letter."

Then Vasistha summoning Sumantra said "Go and invite all the great rulers, and the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and the Sudras. Invite cordially the people of all provinces. Go yourself to Janaka the truthful and valiant king of Mithila. As he is a very old ally of ours I have first mentioned his name. Then go to
 a-h man of character and of great

h also invite the rulers of the East, the
 indhu, Sauvira and Saurashtra Summon
 rs who are friendly to us, to attend the
 th their retinues You now send envoys
 ording to the instructions of the king "

umantra in obedience to Vasistha's words,
 lemissaries to different rulers, and himself
 ite some of them

is, some men engaged in the sacrificial work,
 informed Vasistha that they had got
 ready for the sacrifice At this, saintly
 as greatly pleased and said unto them, 'I
 not to give anything disrespectfully to any
 ything given in scorn or disrespect destroys
 s sin "

ter two or three days, the invited kings and
 an to pour in, with gems and other rich
 King Dasharath

Vasistha then informed the king of the arrival
 ces, all of whom were respectfully received.
 g was carefully arranged for the sacrifice,
 whole place seemed to be filled with all
 bjects

According to the words of both Vasistha and
 ga, Dasharath, one day, under an auspicious
 ired to the sacrificial ground Thereupon,
 nd other Brahmans with Rishyasringa at their
 n the great sacrifice and the King with his
 s initiated into it

CHAPTER VIII

THE SACRIFICE

After a year when the wandering, sacrificial horse returned commenced Aswamedha Sacrifice on the northern bank of the Saraju, and Rishyasringa guided its operations. All the priests duly performed their assigned parts, and after the observance of necessary Pravargya¹ and Upasads² rites. Then all the deities were worshipped first of all oblations were offered to Indra. Rishyasringa and other learned Brahmins began to invoke Indra and other Gods by chanting sacred Mantras of the Vedas. Then with sweet Sama hymns each deity was given his due portion of the sacrifice. Then midday ablutions took place according to Sastric rites and the priests officiated at the third time bath of the King.

On that day no Brahmins ever felt tired and all persons gathered there, the Brahmans, the Sudras, ascetics, monks women, children old and invalid people were sumptuously fed. Profuse food and drink were supplied to everybody. The Brahmans after eating to
1 2 3. after praising the preparations.

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y learned Brahmans performed the opera-
sacrifice according to the rules of the Sastras
me came for rearing the sacrificial posts or
versed in sacrificial rites prepared six posts
of Khadir (*mimosa catechu*) six of Palas
dosa) and one of Sleshamat (*Cardia Latifolia*)
de posts of Devadaru (pine) These twenty
ach 21 cubits or Aratnis long having eight
decked in twenty one pieces of cloth were
ted by the artizans Being wrapped up in
decked with flowers they looked like the
us¹ of the heavens

rahmins constructed the sacrificial fire-place
, and that fire place consisting on three sides
i bricks looked like golden winged Gudada ,
ne purpose of sacrifice, horses, beasts, birds,
id aquatic animals were collected To those
posts were tied hundreds of animals as well
se of the King Then Kausalya after perform-
eliminary rites with a cheerful heart, slew the
se with three strokes Then with the object
ng a son and religious merit, she with pure and
d passed one night by the side of the dead,
rse from evening till the break of the day.
priest led other queens, Mahishis² Vavatas³
ritis to touch the horse attended by Kausalya

constellation of Ursa Major

shatriya caste.

atas of Vaishya caste and Parivritis of Sudra castes

Then Rishyasringa made sacrifice with the marrow of the horse according to the sacred rules and King Dasharath for expiation of his sins smelt odour arising out of the fat cast into fire. Then sixteen Rithvik priests offered the severed limbs of the horse into sacrificial fire. The horse sacrifice according to Kalpa Suttas and Brahmanas extends to three days. First day's ceremony is called Agnistoma second day's is named Uktha and the third day's sacrifice is called Atiratra. Then the ceremonies of Jyotishtoma Ayustoma Abhiyat Atiratra Viswajit, Apturyama were performed with due rites.

In this great horse sacrifice founded by Sayambhu Dasharath gave his Eastern region to the chief sacrificial priests the Western province to Adwaryu the Southern to Brahma and the Northern Udgath.

The Brahmanas were greatly delighted and spoke in a body "You are alone worthy to protect the earth we do not want any land, our days are passed in meditation and in the study of the Vedas give us something else."

Then the chief the Ikshwaku line gave them ten lakhs of kine ten kotis of gold and forty of silver. They then brought those things to Vasistha and Rishyasringa at which they were greatly pleased. Then King
 " said to Rishyasringa

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROPHECY

He again said, "O holy saint, please devise that my race may not be extinct."

Illigent Rishyasringa, learned in the Vedas, said to his son I shall perform the famous Putresthi sacrifice according to the Mantras as laid down in the Kalpa Sutra. This will bless you with offspring.

Rishyasringa began the sacrifice according to the injunctions of the Kalpa Sutra. All the deities, the Gandharvas, Siddhas and other great saints appeared in the sky to take their due shares of the oblations offered.

When the Putresthi sacrifice began the gods appeared before him. Indra said, "O Lord ! A Rakshasa named Vritra is mighty by your boon oppresses us all and we cannot resist him by any means. You were pleased to grant him the boon, and we all suffer for it. This wicked one is tyrannising over the three worlds on account of others' prosperity. Blinded by power and your boon, he is now thinking of conquering the world of gods, and is continually harassing the Yakshas, the Gandharvas, the Brahmans and the Asuras."

The sun does not dare to scorch him with his rays, the wind ventures to blow roughly about him, and the billowy ocean does not dare to stir in his presence.

his presence. We have become greatly afraid of that wicked and horrible Ravan. Please now devise some means for his destruction.

Then the lotus born Brahma after some thought replied "O god! I have found out the means of his destruction. At the time of asking the boon from me, he asked that he might not be slain by any god, Gandharva, Yaksha and Rakshasa. And I agreed to it but in disdain he did not mention the name of Man.

He may therefore be slain by a man. I do not see any other means of his death.

The gods were greatly delighted hearing these words from Brahma's lips.

At this moment, effulgent Vishnu lord of the universe, clad in yellow robes, wearing bracelets of shining gold and holding in his hands shell, discus, mace and lotus came there riding on his Eagle as the sun rides upon the cloud, and was welcomed by the gods with hymns of praise. After he took his seat beside Brahma the gods spoke to him

O Vishnu be thou our shelter. Then Vishnu said, Tell me how I may grant your prayer."

The gods said "Dasharath, the generous and powerful ruler of Ayodhya has three queens like Beauty Modesty and Fame."

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heaven It is for this that we have come
are our only refuge”

hnu, the adored lord of all, assured them
ish all fear For your good I shall destroy
Ravan with all his race, and shall rule over
eleven thousand years”

s then sang hymns of Vishnu After this
Vishnu agreed to divide himself into four and
h in Dasharath's house

Is then said, “Come back to heaven after
insolent Ravan, the enemy of Indra, and the
he world.”

CHAPTER XV

HEAVENLY PAYASA

Narayan who himself knew the means of
destruction asked the gods in what way he could
him The gods said, “Formerly this dreadful
practised great austerities and penance and
received boon from Brahma, the progenitor of
all, that none would be able to destroy him,
asking for the boon he did not mention the
man So assume the form of man and kill
who now commits ravages upon the heaven and
ray women by force”

Vishnu then agreed to accept Dasharath as his father

At that time king Dasharath was eagerly watching the performance of the sacrifice

Then from the sacrificial flame rose a huge dark figure with red eyes and clad in red effulgent as the sun and holding in his both hands a large golden cup with a silver cover containing celestial Payasa¹ within. His voice was deep like the rattle of a drum his body was covered with hairs like that of a lion. face covered with profuse beard and whiskers he had glossy locks. His body was adorned with divine ornaments and he had many auspicious marks on him. He was tall like a mountain peak and dreadful like fire.

That supernatural person in tiger like haughty steps rose out of the flame and casting his eyes on Dasharath said, "O king, know me as being sent by Prajapati."

Dasharath in folded hands replied "Tell me what I can do for you?"

Then that person commissioned by Prajapati said, "O king you have got heavenly Payasa² by worshipping the gods. Give this healthy and procreating Payasa prepared by Prajapati to your wives and you will obtain your desired object through your wives, for which you are performing the sacrifice."

King Dasharath then

1

the

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Then the King greeted him and went round
the errand being over, the divine person,
to the flames.

The sky appears beautiful by the rays of the
moon, Dasarath's palace shone with the bright
faces of the royal dames

During the seraglio Dasarath said to Kausalya,
take this nectar-like Payasa and you will

Thus Dasarath gave her half of the Payasa and
on request of the king, Kausalya gave half of
it to Sumitra Dasaratha then gave the remaining
half and requested her to give half of it to
Lakshmi Thus Dasarath distributed the nectar-like
Payasa amongst his queens, and they were greatly
pleased with this.

After this, his queens grew big with child, and
became elated like Indra adored by gods

CHAPTER XVI

THE VANARAS.

After Vishnu took his birth, Sayambhu the self-existent Lord of all, addressing the Gods, said, To help our well wisher Vishnu, do you create powerful creatures capable of assuming different forms at will. All those helping being must be heroic quick as the wind, intelligent, Versed in laws and in the arts of war and peace, possessing excellent bodies, and they must be invincible and indestructible like the immortals. Produce from Apsaris, Gandharvis celestial dames, and female monkeys a Powerful progeny of apes or monkeys as I had created the King of bears, Jambumana when I yawned."

Hearing these words of Sayambhu the Gods began to procreate sons in the form of monkeys. Maharshi Siddhas Vidyadhar Uraga, Kimpurasha Tarkshya, Yaksha began to create monkeys.

Indra procreated Vali tall as the Mahendra's peak the Sun, Sugriva Vrihaspati Tarak, the intelligent of the apes God Kuvera the beautiful Gandhamadan Viswakarma, Nala and Agni Neela. Then two beautiful Gods Aswnikumar produced Maindra and Dividik

by hurling huge stones and with their teeth and were accomplished in the use of all they could move hills, crush forests and stir

Thus millions of powerful Vanaras came. Some of these monkeys came to live in it of the Rikshavna hills. Some of these took Vali as their leader, Some, Sugriva, some Neela and some Hanuman. And the mighty acted Valluk and the Go-langula races of Thus for the help of Ram a powerful brood, were created

CHAPTER XVII

BIRTH OF RAM

the Aswamedha sacrifice was over the gods invited guests repaired to their respective places. The great saint Rishyasringa having been duly by the King, left Ayodhya with his devoted a who was dearer to her lord than Paulomi to the King himself with his retinue escorted the to a great distance when Rishyasringa asked to retire, at which Dasarath returned with res

after the expiry of the six seasons and on the on of the twelfth month, on the ninth lunar

day of the month of Chaitra under the star Punarvasu, with the Sun, Mars, Saturn Jupiter and Venus at Aries, Capricorn, Libra, Cancer and Pisces and when the Moon with the Jupiter entered Cancer of the Zodiac Kausalya gave birth to great and prosperous Ram with mighty arms, rosy eyes and scarlet lips the joy of Dasarath and the adored of all people. He bore all auspicious marks on his fair body. Then Queen Kausalya looked like Aditi the mother of the gods, with Purandar in her lap. Kaikeyi then gave birth to truthful Bharat—the fourth part of Vishnu. Then Sumitra delivered twin sons. Bharat was born under the Star Pushya, when the Sun entered Pisces and the two sons of Sumitra were born under the Star Aslesha when the sun rose in the Cancer.

Thus four sons of Dasarath were born. They were beautiful like the stars of the heaven as Proshthapada's four fold light. At their birth the Gandharvas began to sing and Apsaras danced in joy kettledrums were played in the heaven and clouds showered flowers on earth. High festivities were held by the people of Ayodhya and its highways became crowded with the citizens and musicians and dancers gave proofs of their skill to the public and the King gave liberally to all—bards astrologers and others and thousands of kine to

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Ram, Kaikeyi's son was named Bharat and first son was named Lakshman and the last born was called Satrughna. The King fed them, and all rural and urban people sumptuously gave gold and jewels to the Brahmins.

Among the princes, eldest Ram was the delight of his father and the object of general regard. All of them were wise, virtuous, educated and versed in the most puissant Ram of spotless character, like the full Moon, was the delight of all eyes. He was a valiant rider, an adept in managing chariot and elephants. He was a master bowman, and engaged in the study of arms, and in ministering to his father's wishes.

His younger brother Lakshman was deeply attached to Ram from his early infancy. He was always attentive to the wishes of Ram. He never ate anything unless he had first taken of it in Ram's company. When Ram went hunting, Lakshman always followed him with bow in his hand. His younger brother Satrughna was likewise dear to Bharat and was dearer to the latter than life. Brahma, the lord of all created beings, Dasarathi was exceedingly happy on account of his four sons.

CHAPTER XVIII

VISVAMITRA'S ARRIVAL

On the attainment of the youth of his sons King Dasarath thought about the marriage of his boys. When Dasarath was thinking about the nuptials of his sons there dropped in the great sage Visvamitra of immortal fame

Desiring to see the king, Visvamitra said to the warders Go and inform the king that Gadha's son is come.

At this the warders hurried to the Royal chamber and informed the king of the arrival of the saint

As soon as Dasarath heard of this he with his priests hastened to meet the ascetic, as Indra goes to meet Vrikaspati the heavenly priest and offered him Arghya. Having accepted the Arghya saintly Visvamitra enquired about the welfare of the kingdom about the royal exchequer cities, provinces and the Royal family. Visvamitra then asked

Are the subordinate princes obedient to you? Are your enemies vanquished?

"Are all the duties to man and gods being properly discharged?"

n enquired about the welfare of Vasistha
ants

Visvamitra was seated, King Dasarath most
said,

saint, you are welcome like nectar itself,
after drought, like the birth of son to an
in, like the recovery of a lost thing, like joy
me of great festivity Have your journey

May I know your wishes? It is my good
ou have come to my house Formerly by
terities you first attained the status of a
then that of Brahmarshi² I have been
nctified by your presence Pray tell me the
our visit, so that I may gladly do your bidd-
I should not feel any hesitation Surely great
accrue to me by your auspicious presence"

CHAPTER XIX

VISWAMITTRA'S SPEECH

ng these words of Dasarath, Visvamitra, with
tanding on end in joy, cheerfully said,

ing, you are born in a great and illustrious
tly Vasistha is your counsellor These words
you alone on earth Now I shall tell you the

object of my coming. O King recently I have begun a sacrifice. But before it has been completed two formidable Rakshasas called Maricha and Subahu who can assume any form at will, have impeded the sacrifice by throwing flesh and blood on the sacrificial altar. Having seen the rites thus disturbed I have left the place in despair. All my labours have been in vain.

"At the time of sacrifice it is not proper to curse any body so I could not give vent to my wrath against those Rakshasas. O King therefore, place your eldest son Ram in my charge. Being protected by me he will be able to destroy those Rakshasas by his divine prowess. By my blessings he will be famous in the three worlds. Do not fear. Marich and Subahu won't be able to stand before him. They are no match for Ram. I assure you, they will be slain by Ram. Myself Maharshi Vasistha and others know his might. If you desire to acquire great merit and fame and if Vasistha and other counsellors agree, then place lotus-eyed Ram in my hand. I want him for my work. Ram too has passed his boyhood. So allow Ram to accompany me and to remain with me for ten nights during my sacrifice. Please see that the time of my sacrifice not over. Don't be nervous or grieved. I will be with you.

CHAPTER XX.

DASARATH'S REPLY

Dasarath on regaining his consciousness sorrow-

"Ram is only about sixteen. He is not
fight with the Rakshasas. I am master of
troops, I shall go with my army and fight
the rovers at night. I shall myself protect
him with bow in my hand, and shall fight
Rakshasas till death. Ram is too young and
un-armed, he has not yet acquired proficiency in
war. Moreover, the Rakshasas are very
fighters. So, I don't think Ram is a fit match.

Besides O Saint, I cannot bear Ram's absence
for a moment. If it is your intention to take
pleasure, please also take me with my forces along.

O Kusik's son, I am nine thousand years
old. I have obtained Ram after great woe. Of the
three sons of mine, Ram the eldest, is the delight of my heart.
Do not take him. Besides who are these
? Whose sons are they? Who helps them?
Does it mean these cunning warriors will be slain?
I will give you everything."

Then Visvamitra replied, "I have heard, there
is a Rakshasa named Ravan born in the line of
Pulastya. Having obtained boon from

Brahma, he is tyrannising over the three worlds with his Rakshasas. He is Maharshi Vistava's son and brother of Kuvera, the lord of wealth. He disdains from pride of disturbing the sacrifice himself. So he has commissioned Marich and Subahu for the purpose. Marich and Subahu at his instance are disturbing my sacrifice."

Thereupon Dasarath said O Samt, I won't be able to fight against that wicked Ravan. It is my great misfortune. Astonishing is the prowess of Ravan, so I have heard. Not to speak of man even the gods cannot stand his might. I can't fight against him or his forces. And whether you take my army or my sons you won't be able to stand before him. My beautiful Ram is first of tender years, secondly he knows very little about battle. So how can I venture to send him along with you? Marich and Subahu then are the sons of Simda and Upasimda and are frightful like death itself. So I can't allow Ram to accompany you. If you wish I may with my men go and fight against those powerful Rakshasas. If you do not agree to it I entreat you to give up Ram.

CHAPTER XXI

VISVAMITRA'S ANGER

heard this Visvamitra flew into rage and the King, he angrily commenced,

st you promised to grant my prayer, now
acking out In fact, such a thing I never
rom one born in Raghu's line. For this act
your dynasty will be extinct If you want
our words and desire the destruction of your
tell me so and let me go to my own place and
yourself with your friends "

the gods became frightened at this great out-
Visvamitra's rage Seeing the three worlds
ion with fear, sage Vasistha said to Dasarath
in the famous line of Ikshwaku you should
tue's self You must not deviate from duty
ow you to be righteous so keep your promise
not stick to your words, your merits will come

Doesn't matter, whether Ram is skilled in
ot, the Rakshasas won't be able to do any harm,
vamitra himself will protect him, as fire pro-
heavenly nectar Therefore, send Ram Ram
ncarnate on earth He is the wisest and
of all, he is the protector of all religious penan-
skilled in weapons But this fact is little known
reat sage you see before you is not less mighty
when this great sage ruled over his kingdom,
gave him some divine arms They are born

of Kṛisāsua and of Projapati Daksha's daughters Jaya and Suprabha. They are of different forms. Rūsika's son is quite conversant with their use.

He is a great sage. the past present and future are known to him. Therefore do not hesitate for a moment to send Ram with him. Viśvamitra himself can destroy those Rakshasas, it is for the benefit of Ram that he wants him.

Dasarath was greatly delighted by these words of Vasistha.

CHAPTER XXII

MANTRAS

Then Dasarath with a glad heart sent for Ram and Lakshman. Kausalya and the King himself performed all the auspicious rites. Priest Vasistha began to chant auspicious mantras. Dasarath after smelling Ram's head in cheerful mind made him over to Viśvamitra.

Seeing lotus-eyed Ram follow Viśvamitra, gentle breeze free from dust began to blow softly tambour was sounded in the sky flowers were showered from

proceeding over half a league from Ayodhya
; at the right bank of the Saraju, Visvamitra
lam in a sweet voice, "Ram, my boy, make
with this water of the river. No more time
wasted now"

initiate you into the Mantras of Vala
a This will remove all the fatigue or fever
journey and your look will not be in any
ed Whether you sleep or remain unguarded
won't be able to defeat by surprise If you
his mantra in the form of Japa, none in the
lds will be equal to you in strength or
e.

the help of these mantras you will be
vercome all difficulties You will never be
oy hunger or thirst These vala and Ativala
root of all knowledge¹ They are the daughters
a. I wish to confer them on you, since you
hy of them You have got virtues no doubt,
will be greatly benefitted by these Mantras

mighty Ram after due oblations received the
and on receiving them Ram looked resplendent
autumnal sun

ie advent of night, Ram performed all the duties
upil towards Visvamitra Then Visvamitra
he night on the bank of the Saraju Ram and
an lying on the unaccustomed bed of grass,
feel uncomfortable on account of Visvamitra's
onversations

CHAPTER XXIII

THE JOURNEY

When the night was over sage Visvamitra said "My boy the night is over. It is time for morning service. Now leave your bed.

At these words of Visvamitra, Ram and Lakshman left their pallet had their bath and performed their Sandhya. Visvamitra then proceeded with them. In their journey Ram and Lakshman saw the confluence of the Saraju with the Ganges, flowing in three courses, on the banks of which were the hermitages of the ascetics and saints who had been practising religious austerities for thousands of years. They were greatly delighted at the sight, and pointing to a particular hermitage they asked, "Whose hermitage is this? Who lives here? We are curious to know."

Then Visvamitra answered with a smile, "Listen, to whom the hermitage belonged in the past. Whom the people call Kam that god Ananga once lived in flesh and blood and this asylum belonged to him. It so happened that once Siva, the great Lord of Kailash after breaking his meditation of Samadhi was going in company with the gods, when foolish Kam dared to disturb his mind. Thereupon, the God Rudra eyed him in anger and reduced him to a mere mortal."

Visvamitra was thus addressing Ram, the forests became aware of their presence their yoga and they soon appeared before received them with warm hospitality and

ya to Visvamitra
he day waned and they performed their
hya Visvamitra with Ram and Lakshman
st And Visvamitra entertained the asce-
h Ram and Lakshman by his pleasant talks

CHAPTER XXIV.

TARAKA

following morning after due ablution, arrived at the bank of the Ganges, where brought a fine boat and said, "With these get upon the boat and cross the Ganges" due honour to them Visvamitra, with Ram and Lakshman began to cross the Ganges flowing into the ocean While they were steering along they heard a tremendous noise Reaching the middle of the river Ram and Lakshman grew eager to know the cause of that sound due to the dashing of the waves against the boat" Hearing this Visvamitra

there is an excellent lake in the Kailash of Lord Brahma As it was created out of Brahma's sweat (Amrita), it is known as the Manasa Lake The

sacred Saraju that flows by Ayodhya rises from that lake and this loud sound issues from the place where it falls into the Ganges. Look ! how the waves of the Ganges and the Saraju break against the boat Bow down to the sacred streams with a devout mind "

Thereafter Ram and Lakshman landed on the right bank and proceeded along it in quick steps. In their journey Ram saw a deep dreadful forest. He then addressing Visvamitra said How dense is this forest filled with the humming noise of the crickets and abounding in ferocious animals. Various kinds of birds are screaming frightfully day and night. Lions, tigers, elephants wild boars are prowling about here and there Dhava Sal, Bignonia Patalas Badaris, and other kinds of trees are to be found every where Which forest is this ?

Visvamitra replied Listen O Kakustha, to whom belongs this terrible forest Formerly there were two flourishing cities called Malada and Karush built by heavenly architects. Formerly at the time of the destruction of Vritra, Indra here incurred stain for killing a Brahmin and here the Gods and the ascetics, soothed the king of gods with the waters of the Ganges, and Indra being pleased conferred a boon, in consequence of which these two places attained great prosperity afterwards.

localities She possesses the strength of elephants Her son is called Maricha She has a vicious mouth and strong arms Taraka is a friend of men She is now about half a yavan We shall have to pass through that forest, but I rely upon the strength of your arms For I can destroy this dreadful Taraka but you can destroy this dreadful Taraka

CHAPTER XXV

THE STORY OF TARAKA

When he said this, Ram said, 'O Sir, I have heard that you possess little strength or prowess How could a man then possess the strength of thousand elephants?' Visvamitra replied, 'Listen how she came to possess this great strength Formerly, there was a mighty Yaksha named Suketu but he had a son He was pure, and used to practise great austerities Brahma was highly pleased at this and gave him a daughter endowed with the strength of elephants and a hundred elephants She is Taraka When Taraka was in her youth, she was married to Jambha's son After sometime, Taraka gave birth to a son, Maricha This Maricha was born as Rakshasa because of a curse When the great saint Agastya destroyed Sunda because of the death of Sunda, Taraka with her son came and intended to take revenge on the saint Taraka in

anger ran to devour Agastya. At this, the saint, cursed Maricha saying "Do thou become a Rakshasa." He also cursed Taraka saying since in frightful form you came to devour a man you be a Rakshasi of terrible form."

Thus cursed by Agastya, Taraka laid waste this fair region, where Agastya is engaged in meditation and sacred rites. Do thou, therefore O descendant of Raghu destroy the terrible Rakshasi for the welfare of Brahmans and cows. Now in the three worlds none but you dare to slay this cursed Yakshi. Nor should you shrink from killing her in the interest of the four orders of castes, simply from the consideration that she is a woman. An act may be cruel or sinful yet it should be performed by a ruler for the protection of his subjects. This is the eternal rule of conduct for those who are engaged in the act of administration. O Kukulstha I kill this wicked Taraka as in the days of yore Indra slew Virochan's daughter Manthara when she tried to destroy the world. O I Ram formerly Vishnu also destroyed Kavya's mother the devoted wife of saint Bhrigu when, at the request of the Asuras, she desired the destruction of Indra. Gods and princes have killed many wicked women. Therefore, O Ram banish your prejudice against woman-slaughter and kill this wicked one.

CHAPTER XXVI

DEATH OF TARAKA

this, Raghava with folded hands replied "O t, at the time of coming, father has asked y you in all your commands So I shall kill he interest of all people"

his Ram took up his formidable bow and ie bow-string, resounding the whole forest nd At this sound the denizens of the forest y perturbed and Taraka too, at first, was azed and then in great anger rushed in the rom which the sound proceeded

ng that colossal, hideous figure Ram address-an and said,

you Lakshman ! how terrible is that Yakshini ! sight strikes terror even into the hearts of

She possesses all the spells of a witch I ner nose and ears, but I have not the heart since she is a woman"

n said this, Taraka in extreme wrath rushed him with uplifted arms and thundering

upon, Visvamitra said, "May victory attend adant of Raghu "

ly Taraka raised a cloud of dust from the id began to shower a fustilade of stones There- in anger, with his shafts, cut off the hands of And when she was roaring in agony, Lakshman

lopped off her nose and ears. Thereupon she assumed various forms and began to shower stones being invisible to the sight. Having seen Ram and Lakshman exposed to a regular fusillade of stones, Visvamitra said "O Ram banish thy aversion to woman-slaughter. She is highly wicked and impious. Therefore kill her before dusk, for Rakshasas grow most formidable when darkness seats in."

Ram then smothered the Yakshi with his shafts, but still the dreadful Yakshi rushed towards Ram. Ram then pierced her breast with arrows and she dropped down dead. At her destruction the gods with Indra at their head blessed both the great saint Visvamitra and Ram and Lakshman from above and asked Visvamitra to confer on Ram the heavenly arms as he was worthy of them and the great work of the gods would be accomplished by him.

CHAPTER XXVII

HEAVENLY ARMS

After the night was over Visvamitra said to Ram. I have been greatly pleased with you. May all good crown your life. I shall now confer on you some cele-

On those heavenly arms appeared and said,
 We are your slaves You may do with us
 ,

With a cheerful mind touched them and said,
 Before me when I remember you "

Before Ram having received those heavenly
 addressing Visvamitra, said, "Please teach me
 use these heavenly arms ; how to apply them
 to withdraw them " Visvamitra then taught
 Mantras about their use

g acquired skill in the use of heavenly arms
 n proceeded along his journey, and on the way
 pleasant and beautiful forest and out of curio-
 ked Visvamitra whose hermitage it was

mitra replied, "It was formerly the hermitage
 n, and here he attained his spiritual bliss and
 the place is known as Siddhasram "

ie days of yore Lord Vishnu dwelt here for
 ousand years At that time, Virochana's son,
 e famous Danava king, ruled over the three
 by conquering Indra and other deities by his
 At one time, king Vali performed a great sac-
 Then the gods with Agni at their head, approa-
 ishnu and requested him to do a thing for the
 of the Gods before Vali's sacrifice was over
 aid, "People from various quarters are going to
 rificial place for alms, and having their prayers
 and Vali too, gives whatever one begs of him

Therefore, for the benefit of the Gods please assume the form of a dwarf "

When the Gods thus implored Narayan Kashyapa with Aditi was observing a long vow and time came for receiving boon from Vishnu.

Vishnu then appeared before Kashyapa and Kashyapa said "Myself Aditi and other Gods pray that you may incarnate as my son in the womb of Aditi "

Then Narayan was born in Aditi's womb as a dwarf or Vaman. Vaman appearing before Vali asked for ground measured by three steps and under the plea of asking for alms he covered the three worlds by three foot steps. Having thus restrained Vali he again made Indra the lord of the world, and here dwelt Vaman and myself out of reverence towards him have selected the spot as my hermitage. Here you will have to slay those wicked Rakshasas who come here to disturb the sacrifice. This hermitage is as much thine as mine."

Saying this Visvamitra entered the forest with Ram and Lakshman like the moon emerged from mist with the Punarvasu stars.

Ram then asked Visvamitra to begin his sacrifice that very day. Ram and Lakshman having passed the night peacefully left their beds early in the morning

CHAPTER XXVIII

FIGHT WITH THE RAKSHASAS

d Lakshman asked Visvamitra in the morn-
cate to them when they would have to resist
d Subahu As Visvamitra was engaged in
re remained silent, at which other hermits
he sage is now engaged in penance he will
ilence for six consecutive days and nights
tect the forest for these six nights "

se words of the hermits, Ram and Lakshman
rmour and with bows in hand guarded the
and night. Thus five days passed and on
lay Ram said to Lakshman, "You must now
on the alert "

sacrifice was going on and Visvamitra and
ests were reciting the Mantras. Kusha,
flowers, and drinking vessels were arranged
altar, and the sacred fire was lit upon it As
ns, the sky grew cloudy and loud with thunder,
kshasas began to pour in in great haste and
Marich and Subahu began to rain drops of
the sacrificial altar

us Ram cast his eyes upwards and finding the
as rushing in a body, addressing Lakshman said,
like to kill these poor Rakshasas now but
re them off by the Manava weapon as the wind
f the clouds "

red grass used at sacrifice and other sacred rites

The manava weapon rolled back the Rakshasas with Marich into the sea and then with Agneya Astra (fire arms) killed Subahu in the fight. At this all the hermits were greatly pleased and began to honour Ram like Indra the conqueror of Gods and Asuras. Visvamitra then performed the sacrifice without any further disturbance. After the performance of the ceremony Visvamitra blessed Ram and praised him for his prowess. Thus after slaying the Rakshasas Ram and Lakshman passed the night in the forest.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BOW

In the morning Ram and Lakshman appeared before Visvamitra beaming like fire and said Please command what more we are to execute. Then the ascetics with Visvamitra replied, "A great sacrifice is to be performed by Janaka the king of Mithila. All of us and you will witness there a wonderful bow. In the days of yore this bow was given to King Devarat by the Gods. Not to speak of man Gods Gandharvas, Asuras and Rakshasas cannot put string to that bow.

s and incense. You will behold that wondrous also sacrificial rites of Janaka "

the time of setting out for Mithila Visva-
 essing the sylvan gods said, "My object has
 I I am now proceeding towards the north
 alaya regions on the banks of the Bhagirathi "
 s and other denizens of the forests beasts
 —escorted Visvamitra to a great distance
 ening Visvamitra reached the banks of the

2

CHAPTER XXX

GENEALOGY OF VISVAMITRA

the performance of the evening services Ram
 vamisra,

te tell me which place is this I feel curious

mitra said, 'In ancient times there was a
 ng named Kusha He was the son of Lord
 u Kusha's wife was Baidarbhi Four sons
 himself in prowess, were born to him They
 med Kushambha, Kushanabha, Amurtaraja

1

Kusha called his sons before him and told
 learn the art of governing the people and
 acquire the merits of a Kshattriya

After this, the four sons founded four seats of Government.

Kushambha founded the city of Kaushambha Kushanabha the city of Mahadaya Amurtaraja Dharmaranya and Vasu, the city of Girivraja This Girivraja with its five hills and the river belong to Vasu This river Sone is also known as the Maghadhi because it has issued from the province of Maghada Flowing between the five hills it looks like a garland of flowers. Look, how its extended banks are rich with corns."

"Ghrithachi was Kushanabha's wife Hundred daughters were born unto her In time they attained their youth Once these young girls, beautiful as blooming in the rains, were sporting themselves with singing and dancings in the garden Being charmed with their beauty like stars in a cloudless sky the Wind god ir beauty before them and sued them for their hands, cared before them and sued them for their hands, saying. Be my wives and you will enjoy long lives Human youth is transient but I shall confer eternal youth and immortality on you."

The girls burst forth in a mocking laugh at this incoherent words of the wind god and said, V. why do you in the hearts of all creatures. We km

shall accept him for our husband on whom
pleased to bestow us"

the Wind-god became highly enraged, he
limbs and bent their frames by entering into

The girls then returned home with their
and began to weep bitterly. Kushanabha
pained at the sight of his daughters and
out the cause of their miseries. The girls
ed everything about their mishaps with the

Kushanabha was greatly pleased and he
m for their great forbearance. "For-
said he, "is charity, Forbearance is truth,
is sacrifice, Forbearance is fame, For-
s religion. The whole universe rests on
e"

abha then thought about their marriage and
with his ministers

time a Brahman named Chuli was engaged
religious austerities, and one Gandharva
led Somada—Urmila's daughter—attended
After sometime, the ascetic was pleased with
and asked what he could do for her. Somada
fully said, "I ask for the birth of a virtuous
gh your grace. I am still a maid and you be
fulfil the desire of my heart"

ascetic Chuli being pleased with her, conferred
mind-begotten son called Brahmadatta.
ta founded the great city of Kampilya.

King Kushanabha thought of giving his daughters to this Brahmadatta. When at the time of marriage Brahmadatta touched the hands of his brides all their ugliness and crookedness of forms were at once removed and they got back their former beauty. After marriage Brahmadatta returned with his wives to Kampilya.

After this, Kushanabha performed the Putreshti sacrifice for the birth of a son. When the sacrifice was begun king Kusha addressing Kushanabha said, "My boy you will be soon blessed with a virtuous son named Gadhi and you will become famous on account of Gadhi."

Then after sometime, a highly virtuous son named Gadhi was born to Kushanabha. Oh, Kakustha! That pious Gadhi is my father. I am called Kaushika because I am sprung from Kusha's line. I had a sister born before me and her name was Satyavati and she was married to Richika. Following her lord she ascended Heaven in person and my generous sister Kushiki assumed the form of a river for the welfare of all creatures. My sister is now a noble river issuing from the Himalayas. Out of affection for my sister Kushiki I live in the vicinity of the Himalayas. It was for the purpose of completing the sacrifice to Siddhasram I have told you this. Now you retire.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE ORIGIN OF THE GANGES

morning, Viswamitra roused Ram and Lakshman and set out for their journey. After a long distance they saw the sacred Janhavi, swans and cranes. They then bathed in the river and offered oblations to the Gods and to their ancestors. Ram then asked Viswamitra, "I wish to hear how the Ganga flowing in three directions and embracing the three worlds falls from the mountain—the lord of rivers."

Viswamitra replied, "Oh Ram! Himavat (the Himalaya), the foremost of mountains and hills. Two lovely daughters were born to him. Mena, the beautiful one, was the beloved wife of Himavat, and Ganga was his daughter. Her second daughter is known as Parvati. Once upon a time the Gods in a body besought him for Ganga flowing in three directions for the welfare of the three worlds he gave his daughter to them flowing at will and for the benefit of all beings. The Gods then went away with her. The other daughter adopted a stern vow and practised asceticism. Himavat married Uma to Rudra. These daughters of Himavat are loved by all."

Ram and Lakshman then requested Viswamitra why Ganga flows in three directions. Thereupon Viswamitra says of yore the blue-throated God, Mahadev,

took a wife and indulged in amorous sports but no son was born to him though hundred years of the Gods had passed away. The Gods became naturally anxious they then prayed to Mahadev. Rudra being pleased, resumed his divine energy and cast the germinal seed on earth. The earth overflowed with that divine energy. Fire and Wind then entered into it and developed into a white hill and a forest of glossy Sara reeds. And in this Sara jungle mighty kartikeya sprang from Fire. Uma then cursed the Gods in anger saying that since she failed in getting a son their wives would be issueless. She then cursed the earth that she would have various forms and many would lord over it and she would never experience motherly affection. Seeing the Gods thus distressed Byomkesh went towards the west and engaged himself in religious meditation. I shall now tell you the sacred history of Bhagirathi. When Pashupati was engaged in austerities with Parvati, Gods approached Brahma and asked for their Commander-in-chief which the latter had previously promised. Then the lotus-born Brahma replied,

Curse of Uma will not fail. Therefore, a son from Fire will be born in the Mandakini, the celestial Ganges. That son will be your Commander-in-chief. The elder sister Ganga will acknowledge the boy as her younger sister Uma's son, and he will also be most dear to Um

her womb Ganga being overwhelmed with the energy, cast it off near the Himalayas, at the foot of Fire. As it came out of her it glittered like a mass of molten gold and in consequence of his lustre all objects near about were turned into copper and silver. Distant objects were turned into tin and iron, and its excreta into lead. In this manner various metals came into existence. My boy, therefore, known as Jatarupa, because it derived its name from another. As soon as the energy was exhausted a son was born. Indra and other Gods said, "Oh, what a son will be called Kartikeya and will be known in the three worlds." Kartikeya sucked (the milk of) six stars with his six months, and thus he was brought up. He is highly beautiful in form and he conquered the Danavas by his might. O king! who worships this Kartikeya is blessed with wealth and with sons and grandsons and live with a long life and death."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE DESCENT OF THE GANGES

Maharshi Kaushika resumed—"A pious king named King Virad ruled in Ayodhya. He had two wives named Virad and Sumati. Keshini was the daughter of the sage Baidharva, and Sumati of Maharshi Kashyapa. King Virad had a son, king Sagar with his wives repaired to

the Himalayas and began to do religious penance. Maharshi Bhrigu lived near that place. Sagar used to worship him. Saint Bhrigu was greatly pleased with Sagar and blessed him saying that he would obtain both fame and sons that one of the wives would deliver sixty thousand sons and the other only one. Then after a length of time, the elder queen Keshini brought forth a son called Asamanja and Sumati was delivered of a gourd and when it burst open out of it came sixty thousand sons of Sagar. These sons in time attained beauty and youth, and Asamanja got a son by the name of Anshuman—beloved by all men. Long after this, king Sagara thought of performing a sacrifice. The sacrifice was held in the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhya mountains. Prince Anshuman followed the sacrificial horse but Vasava assuming the form of a Rakshasa stole away the horse. At this, the priests asked the king to bring back the horse, or else the sacrifice would be defective and it would bring misfortune. The king then asked his sixty thousand sons to search the whole world encircled by the oceans, and even to delve the earth to find out the horse. They then began to roam about the earth but (for) several yoyanas . . .

avoc for the sacrificial horse The Grandsire
 ssing them said, "Earth belongs to Vasudeva,
 his wife, and assuming the form of Kapila, he
 otects the earth so the sons of Sagar will be
 by the wrath of Kapila "

ods then departed rejoicing at Brahma's

; excavated the earth far and wide the sons
 returned to their father and reported of their
 finding the horse Sagar then asked his sons
 delve the earth The sons then again rushed
 the depth of the earth As they dug deeper
 or they came across the elephant of the quarter
 rupaksha, huge like a mountain, holding the
 its head When this mighty elephant from
 hakes his head then occurs earthquake¹ They
 retrated the east and the south and in the
 quarter they saw another mighty elephant
 Mahapadma, holding the earth on its head
 they beheld in the west the great elephant
 sa, similarly in the north they saw Bhadra,
 snow, holding the earth on him Then Sagara's
 in to dig the north-eastern quarter¹ in rage and
 ne across Vasudeva in the form of Kapila and
 nd the sacrificial horse close by him They then
 rage rushed towards Kapila, thinking that the
 d stolen the horse

site is now identified near the place where the Ganges
 he sea

At this Kapila was greatly enraged and uttered a terrible roar and the sons of Sagara were at once reduced to ashes.

Seeing the delay of his sons king Sagar asked his grandson Anshuman to search for them. Prince Anshuman after enquiries arrived at the spot where the sons of Sagar were reduced to ashes. He was overwhelmed with grief at the sad fate of his uncles and wished to offer oblations of water to them but he found no water there. Then he saw Vinata's son Garura, maternal uncle of the sons of Sagara. Garura then addressing Anshuman said Do not lament Their destruction was for the welfare of all creatures. They have been reduced to ashes by Kapila. So do not offer them water but perform their watery rites with the sacred waters of Ganga. These ashes on being watered by Ganga those sixty thousand sons will go to heaven. Therefore go back with the sacrificial horse and complete the sacrifice of your grandfather.

Mighty Anshuman then returned with the horse and narrated to the king everything faithfully. The king then finished the sacrifice in sorrow. The king after reigning for thirty thousand years ascended the heaven but he did not see who brought the sacred Ganga on earth.

When Sagar was bowed with age the people elected

king Anshuman retired to the Himalayas, practising religious austerities for thirtytwo years he ascended the heaven Prince greatly mortified when he heard about the death of his ancestors and he became anxious for progeny After sometime a son named Bhagirath was born to virtuous Dilip . Dilip died leaving the throne to Bhagirath after a reign of thirty thousand

Bhagirath was without any issue In order to progeny on earth Bhagirath practised severe austerities in the locality of Gokarna

At last, Brahma was pleased with his penance and decided to grant him a boon. Bhagirath then said with folded hands, "If you are pleased to grant me boon that my ancestors' sons receive oblations of water from me in the after world, my ashes be saved by the waters of Ganga May my sons by attain heaven."

Brahma replied, "O mighty Bhagirath, noble is thy devotion, your desire be fulfilled and good betide you for your service for Ganga's fall, the earth shall be able to bear

Bhagirath then prayed to Siva for a year Pashupati was pleased to Bhagirath, 'I have been pleased with you and I shall place the mountain's daughter on my head " Then with great impetuous force precipitated herself from the sky on Siva's head And Ganga thought of rushing away Sankara by her dash At this Sankara was angry and he thought of confining her, And

O Ram ! when Ganga fell on Rudra's tangled locks resembling the Himavat, inspite of her endeavours she could not disengage herself from the matted locks and reach the earth ! She thus remained confined for many years. Bhagirath then again threw himself into severe austerities. Thereupon Siva was greatly pleased and cast off Ganga towards the Vindulake. As she was let loose, seven streams branched off from her. Three streams flowed towards the east while the Suchakshu the Sita and the Sindhu flowed Bhagirath's chariot. The royal saint went ahead and Ganga followed him. Then the celestials looked upon Ganga descending on earth. All in joy witnessed the descent of the Ganges as it followed the course of Bhagirath's car.

In her course Ganga flooded the sacrificial ground of the great saint Jahnu. At this Jahnu drank her up in wrath. Thereupon the Gods and others began to pray to Jahnu. The saint being thus propitiated released Ganga through his ears. Therefore, Ganga is known as Jahnavi or Jahnu's daughter. Then Ganga again began to follow in the wake of Bhagirath's car and having reached the ocean she entered the subterranean region. And when the sacred waters of the Ganga overflowed the heaps of ashes of the Sagara's sons, their sins were washed off and they at once attained heaven.

Then Brahma spoke to Bhagirath "O most pious

known as Tripathaga because she flew in
ons Do thou now here offer oblations of
r grandsires Your mighty ancestors Anshu-
p had failed to bring Ganga on earth For
ght Ganga thou shalt also attain heavenly
odb etide thee"

i then offered oblations to the sons of
returned again to his capital. O Ram, I
ou the story of Ganga's descent Whoever
sacred story attains the favour of his ances-
ods and whoever listens to it has all his
lled, his sins are removed and he attains
nd fame"

ien passed their night on the bank of the

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE RISE OF NECTAR

following morning they crossed the Ganges
ed the city of Vishala Ram wanted to
ething about the city The great ascetic
a said, "O Ram, listen to what befell this
ancient times, in the Satya yuga, the sons of
Aditi thought as to how could they be
and be free from disease and old age Then
heir minds that by churning the ocean of milk
d obtain Amrita or nectar They then began

to churn the ocean with the Mandara hill as the churning rod and Vasuki as the cord. After churning for thousand years the serpent Vasuki began to vomit virulent poison and bite the rock with its fangs. Thereupon rose a deadly poison like fire and began to scorch the whole universe. Then the Suras and the Asuras ran to great Sankara crying Save us save us, O Rudra !

Then Hari appeared before Mahadev and said "As you are the foremost of the Gods, what has first come out of the ocean is due to thee. So receive the first offering in the form of poison.

Finding the Gods in distress, Siva drank the dreadful poison as if it were nectar then leaving the Gods, went away

The celestials then resumed their churning. But after sometime suddenly the Mandara hill began to sink into the subterranean region. Hrishikesh then assuming the form of a tortoise supported the hill on his back and taking hold of the top of the hill by his hand began to churn the deep. Another thousand years elapsed. Then arose Dhanwantary the father of medicines bearing in his hands a stick and a Kamandalu. After him rose the beautiful damsels called Apsaras—so called because they emerged from water. As neither the

2 called Asuras, and as Aditi's sons accepted
 nown as the Suras Then rose Uchaisrava,
 rses, and Kaustabha, the best of gems , and
 ar Then ensued a great fight over the
 een Aditi's and Diti's sons, and many
 killed in the affray In this havoc Vishnu
 he form of an exceedingly beautiful woman,
 2 nectar and destroyed Asuras who ran after

of Diti thus being slain, Diti was greatly
 h grief and prayed for the birth of a son
 iction of Indra, and began to practise great
 As she was engaged in austerities, the
 d Indra attended on her and served her
 devotion and respect Diti was greatly
 Indra and she said to him that after ten
 uld deliver a son who would be a brother
 not his foe One day, when worshipful
 pping in her bed, Indra cut the foetus in her
 even parts with his thunder At this the
 to cry at which Indra asked it to be silent
 n't cry"—(Ma ruda) Diti then rose from
 ud, "Don't kill it, let the seven parts of
 be the guardian deities of the wind. They
 own as Marut as you have said Ma ruda
 Hearing this Indra bowed to Diti and
 her This is the place where Indra attended
 Ram, powerful Ikswaku had a son by the
 bhala, this city of Vishala was built by him
 on is Hem Chandra, Hem Chandra's son

Suchandra and his son was Srinjaya Srinjaya's son was Sahadeva his son Kishawa and his son Somadatta now rules over the city."

Hearing of the arrival of Visvamitra and Ram the king of Vishala welcomed them with great hospitality Visvamitra on his enquiry told him the object of their travel. After passing the night at Vishala they reached Mithila the next day. The ascetics were greatly delighted at the sight of Mithila, while surveying the city Ram witnessed an old solitary but beautiful hermitage.

CHAPTER XXXV

AHALYA

Ram then asked O worshipful Sir! The hermitage looks like a deserted one. I wish to know all about this.

Visvamitra said, "This hermitage once belonged to the great saint Gautama. He used to practise austerities here with his wife Ahalya. One day when the sage was absent Indra the lord of Sachi entered the hermitage in the guise of Gautama, and addressing Ahalya said, O my enchanting beauty! Amorous ones do not wait for their monthly courses, so you satisfy

been satisfied, now take me away from this
protect myself and yourself from the wrath
1 "

plied, "I have been gratified, now let me
lace "

hese words Indra through fear of the ascetic
tage in hurried steps. Thereafter the mighty
ama, after bathing in the holy waters and
performance of oblations with Kusha grass
s in hand appeared before the cottage like a
e. At his sight Indra's face darkened. See-
thus stealing away from his cottage in the
n ascetic he cursed him in anger, 'Since you
yed my wife assuming my form, you will
" Addressing Ahalya, Gautama said, "You
in the hermitage, unseen by others, your bed
ashes, you will feed only on air, and your
will be unbounded. Thus you will live for
usand years. When the son of Dasaratha,
come to this forest, you should minister unto
the rites of hospitality without covetousness,
will be absolved from your sin, will get back
er form and will be re-united with me "

these words Gautama left his hermitage and
ie Himalays for meditation

after a great trouble and with the help of the
back his manhood after a long time

Ram with Lakshman entered Gautama's her-
ter Visvamitra, and found Ahalya had acquired

greater beauty in consequence of asceticism, too dazzling to be gazed upon even by the Gods. It appeared as if the Creator with great care created this paragon of womanly beauty. She was wonderfully beautiful like a flame in the midst of smoke like the full moon enveloped in mist or like the glare of the Sun hidden behind the clouds. Ahalya remained concealed till the expiry of her curse. But as soon as she was absolved from it, she became visible to all. Ram and Lakshman then bowed to her but Ahalya remembering Gautama's words caught hold of their feet and offered them Arghya and water and received them with warm hospitality.

Then flowers were showered from above and Gods praised her for her piety. Maharshi Gautama came to know all this through his Yoga. He returned to his hermitage and began to practise religious penance with Ahalya with a cheerful heart.

CHAPTER XXXVI

VISVAMITRA

Then Ram and Lakshman with Visvamitra pro-

he royal saint Janaka heard of Visvamitra's hastened to receive them with his priest and other Brahmins versed in the Vedas, g Arghya to Visvamitra said, "To-day, ce of the gods my sacrifice has been crowned s, since you have graced the occasion by your resence"

hen respectfully asked Visvamitra, "Who are godlike youths, equipped with swords, bows s? They appear mighty as gods! As the the moon shine in the sky so they have up the place. There is great resemblance he two Whose sons are these raven-locked d why have they undertaken such a tiresome

utra replied, "O King, they are the sons of arath." Visvamitra then related all that in the journey, viz, the destruction of the , and the removal of Ahalya's curse

the virtuous Satananda, the eldest son of Gautama observed "I am extremely grate- he news of) the removal of my mother's curse. worship you with fruits and flowers? Did you y father's hospitality?"

ent Visvamitra replied, "Nothing has been ne Your mother has been re-united with your ke Renuka with Jamadagni"

Satananda addressing Ram said, "Since mighty tra, the foremost of the ascetics, is your

protector you are the most fortunate man in the three worlds. I shall now relate to you how this great ascetic of wonderful deeds Visvamitra has attained highest Brahminhood.

In ancient times there was a king named Kusha. His son was Kushanabha. Kushanabha's son was Gadhi. This holy and mighty Visvamitra is Gadhi's son. This learned saint long ruled over his kingdom. Once upon a time this sage began to sojourn over the earth with his army. At length, the mighty conqueror Visvamitra reached the hermitage of Vasistha green with plants and trees and adorned with fruits and flowers and visited by birds and deer. Pious ascetics lived in that holy hermitage some of whom lived only on water some on air some on scer leaves and some on roots and fruits. Visvamitra was greatly pleased at this sight. Visvamitra then went to Maharshi Vasistha and enquired after his welfare. Then after mutual greetings, sage Vasistha pressed the king to accept his hospitality. Thereupon Visvamitra said that enough hospitality had already been by his kind words but Vasistha insisted upon Visvamitra's receiving his hospitality with his men and army. Visvamitra at last consented.

Sage Vasistha then summoned his patri-coloured

sufficient food without delay" At these words
 ha, the cow Savala produced various eatables
 to the palate She produced sugar-canes,
 e, excellent wine called Gani, costly drinks,
 kinds of food, rice, Payasa, soups, Dadhikulya
 and other palatable food with silver dishes (for
 o the guests) Visvamitra was greatly pleased
 hospitality, and after expressing his thanks he
 or the cow saying, "I shall give you a million
 please give your Savala in exchange of them.
 crificial cow is indeed a rare gem The King
 t is entitled to all gems, so you confer this
 on me According to law I am entitled to it"
 this Vasistha said, "I cannot part with Savala
 lions and millions of cows, nor for all the gold
 ver you propose to offer This cow follows
 the reputation of a noble man I live by her
 perform my sacrifices with her help I tell you
 ly Savala is my everything Its very sight fills
 h joy Therefore, I cannot give you the cow"
 vamitra then again implored for the cow and
 ed him rich provinces, thousands of elephants,
 golden chariots and various kinds of jewels in
 ge But Vasistha again stoutly refused
 ntra then finding the ascetic thus unyielding took
 ow forcibly Then the cow thought with tears,
 the saint really forsaken me? Why the royal
 its drag me thus?
 en Savala tore herself off from the King's
 its and ran to Vasistha and said, 'Have you

forsaken me? Royal servants are taking me away by force?

Vasistha then sorrowfully answered. "No Savala I have not forsaken you. You have done no harm to me. The king is taking you by force from me. My power is not equal to his might. Look he has elephants, horses, chariots and a vast army. He is a Kshattriya and a ruler of the earth. Moreover he is my guest and it is not proper to injure the guest."

Then Savala humbly said. O saint Kshattriya's power is not much, but greater is the might of a Brahman. the power of a Brahmin is supernatural and it exceeds that of a Kshattriya. Though Visvamitra is exceedingly powerful, yet he is not a match for you. I can work wonders like Brahman. Please permit me, I shall baffle all the attempts of this wicked king and humble his pride to the dust."

Vasistha then told Savala to produce soldiers to destroy Visvamitra's army. Savala then produced (by her supernatural powers) a number of Palhavas by her lowing. And Visvamitra began to destroy those Palhavas in rage. At this, Savala produced the terrible Yavanas along with the Sakas¹. They were formidable in power and were armed with sharp swords and ^{advers}. They were yellow-coloured and were clad with yellow

Thereupon the Yavanas the Kombojeans and
rians became sorely afflicted

Savala again created a fresh army From her
g roars came into existence the Kombojeans,
nt às the Sun , from her udder sprang the
is , from her private parts came the Yavanas ,
anus the Sakas , from the pores of her hairs
e Haritas and the Kiratas These soldiers began
y Visvamitra's army

his hundred sons of Visvamitra with their
rushed towards Vasistha At this Vasistha
a terrific roar and all the sons of Visvamitra
uced into ashes Seeing his sons thus destroyed
ra was overwhelmed with shame He then
to his capital with a broken heart and after
; the only surviving son on the throne, repaired
Himalays and began to practise great austerities

Byomkesha to ask for a boon

r a length of time, God Mahadeva appeared
itra then asked for bow and arrows with their
ous Mantras Being thus endowed with divine
svamitra again in haughtiness attacked Vasistha's
ge At the approach of Visvamitra, the ascetics
n that forest began to run away in fear, though
a assured them and ask them to stop Visvamitra
irled his formidable weapon against Vasistha.
istha in rage destroyed all his aims and defeated
Visvamitra was thus vanquished by Brahminical

"Shame on Kshatriya's power I must anyhow
Brahminhood "

Great Visvamitra was deeply mortified at this defeat. Then having resolved to perform severe austerities he repaired to the south with his queen. There he passed his days in religious meditations living on fruits and roots. During that period four sons called Habispanda Madhuspanda Drihanetra and Maharath were born to him. Thus thousand years rolled off than Brahma—the grand sire of all created beings—appeared and said O king ! You will be counted as a royal saint and henceforward you will be known as a Rajarshi.”

Then Visvamitra hung down his head in shame and thought “Even after such austerities the gods consider me only as a Rajarshi. I shall therefore, practise more severe austerities to attain Brahmin hood.” Having thus resolved he again engaged himself in severe penance.

At that time, king Trisanku of Ikshvaku's line thought of performing a sacrifice in order to attain heaven in his material body and spoke about it to Vasistha. But Vasistha refused to perform the ceremony as the idea was absurd. At this king Trisanku approached Vasistha's sons and asked them to help him by performing the sacrifice.

But Vasistha's sons grew angry at this and cursed him saying that he would become a Chandala. And when the night was over the King attained Chandalhood.

ground ' Finding the King thus reduced to his ministers and followers ran away from him. Janku then went to Visvamitra. Seeing the King reduced to such a miserable plight, Visvamitra was moved with pity and enquired about him. He then related how instead of attaining his desire he had met with such dire calamity, and concluded saying, 'O best of ascetics ' Intending to perform a sacrifice I have failed to enlist the aid of my spiritual preceptor. I do now find that always supreme, valour is nothing. Destiny rules all. Therefore, grant thy favour on him. His endeavours have been frustrated by Fate. I seek thy refuge "

When he heard the King thus speak, Visvamitra's heart was moved with pity and he gave him shelter. Visvamitra then asked his pupils to bring all the sages and saints together including Vasistha's sons. Udaya and other sons of Vasistha said, "How can we and Rishis take part in the sacrifice of him who is a Chandala and has a Kshatriya for his priest ?" Hearing this from the disciples, Visvamitra flamed in anger and uttered a terrible curse that those insolent pupils should be reduced to ashes and for seven hundred years should roam over the world feeding on dog's flesh and wearing deadman's cloths. They would be known as Bhikas, despicable and of wicked practices, then he addressed the assembled hermits. Visvamitra said, this descendant of Ikshaku is virtuous and generous. He

has come to me for shelter. He wants to go to Heaven with his mortal body. So please be engaged with me in the sacrifice. The sacrifice then begun and Visvamitra after a length of time invoked all the Gods to receive their shares of the sacrifice but the celestials refused to come. Thereupon Visvamitra waxed angry and said to Trisanku. O Lord of men ! I shall by the power of my asceticism send you bodily to the heaven and through my virtue you now ascend the heaven.

At these words, Trisanku, began to ascend bodily into heaven. Seeing Trisanku thus ascending into heaven Indra said, O Trisanku go back. You have been cursed by your spiritual guide therefore, fall headlong from it. Trisanku then began to precipitate headlong from heaven, crying unto Visvamitra "O save me, save me. Hearing this distressful cries, sage Visvamitra cried in wrath. "Stop." And then like a second Prajapati he created another constellation of the seven Rishis and other stars in the southern sky. I shall create another Indra exclaimed Visvamitra in rage, "or the world will be without a Indra." Thereupon, the gods and the saints humbly said, O highly exalted sage, this king has been cursed by his preceptor so he doesn't deserve to ascend the heaven in mortal frame."

Visvamitra then replied "O Gods, I have promised

THE RAMAYAN

Is then said, "Let it be so The stars created all shine in sky outside the Zodiac circle, and with bent head will live there like an immortal, these luminous bodies shall follow Trisanku as if chained heaven" Virtuous Visvamitra agreed after the Gods were gone Visvamitra address-etics said, 'Lo ! an interruption to penance created by Trisanku in the south So let us the west and carry on our rites in the sacred of Pushkara" Visvamitra then went to the began to practise great austerities By that barisha, the king of Ayodhya, was performing a and Indra at the time of sacrifice stole away icial animals At this, his priest told the king secure those animals or purchase a man in ad Then Ambarisha went in search of those and arrived at the hills of Bhrigutunga There the son of Maharshi Richik with his wife and and after stating everything he asked for a son and promised him millions of cows in exchange Richik replied, "O King, I cannot sell the eldest way" Then his wife said, "The youngest is my I can't part with him" Hearing the parents ask, the second son Shunashefa said, "Father is ling to sell the eldest, mother doesn't want to off the youngest , it, therefore, seems that I am saleable son, so you take me with you"

arisha then took him in his chariot by giving of cows and sufficient gold

At mid-day King Ambarisha reached Pushkara. There Shunashefa found his maternal uncle Visvamitra engaged in meditation. At his sight Shunashefa afflicted with thirst and hunger begged Visvamitra to give him shelter. Then Visvamitra assured him and asked his own sons to assume the forms of the sacrificial animals in order to save the hermit's son from Ambarisha. At this Visvamitra's sons tauntingly remarked, "You want to save another's son at the cost of your own ones! It is as good as to feed upon one's own flesh out of commiseration towards other creatures." At this Visvamitra grew angry and cursed his own sons as he did the sons of Vasishta. Then addressing Shunashefa Visvamitra said, "You now put on a zone of Kasha grass, a garland of red flowers, bismear your body with red sandal and pray to Agni close to the Vaishnavi sacrificial stake, and I give you two hymns, you chant them at the time of Ambarisha's sacrifice and your life will be saved."

Shunashefa then with a devoted heart took those Vedic Gathas (songs)

When Ambarisha arrived with Shunashefa Shunashefa like a sacrificial animal was tied to the sacrificial post. Shunashefa then began to chant those Vedic hymns and to pray to Indra, Agni and Vishnu. Indra was then pleased with Shunashefa. He blessed him with

THE RAMAYAN

t Visvamitra continued his rigid austerities
e the heavenly nymph Menaka was bathing
red waters of Pushkara Visvamitra was be-
her fascinating beauty and took her to his

Visvamitra passed ten years with Menaka,
became evident to him that his penance had
en He was then stung with remorse and
l thought that it was a deep-laid game of the
enaka was greatly frightened by the saint's
d stood before him in folded hands. But Visva-
ired her in sweet words and commenced his
s again Brahma again appeared before him
ed him as Māharshi Then Visvamitra respect-
,"You have not conferred on me Brahminhood
I have not as yet succeeded in conquering
s" Brahma replied, "If your mind be not dis-
ven in presence of temptations you will know
have subdued your senses Therefore strive
t"

Visvamitra again commenced severe austeri-
e prayed with uplifted arms feeding on air, in
, he surrounded himself with five fires, in rains
ained in uncovered place, and in winter, day
ht he stood immersed in water Thus passed
d years

reupon Indra, the king of Gods, was greatly
l by the austerities of the great sage and planning
mischief of Visvamitra he summoned Rambha
um Rambha pleaded to be excused for she dared

not disturb the penance of the Rishi. Indra then encouraged her saying that Cupid and Spring would help her in her mission. Then the beautiful nymph, Rambha, descended on earth and began to sing rapturous songs in accompaniment of cuckoo's notes. Visvamitra was, at first, greatly delighted at hearing this but he immediately saw through the deep game of Indra and he cursed Rambha in extreme rage, condemning her to be turned into marble and remain as such for ten thousand years. Unfortunate Rambha was turned into stone and Indra and Cupid ran away in fear. But Visvamitra was struck with remorse for thus losing his temper. He found that for his lust and anger he could not attain his object. He then left his northern quarters and came to the east, and engaged himself in severer austerities and was absorbed in meditation. He remained listless and silent like a hillock for thousand years. Then after the expiry of thousand years he wished to break his fast and he was about to take his food. Indra came in the disguise of a Brahmin and asked for food. Sage Kausik willingly gave him all and remained himself without any food. Visvamitra then suspended his breath and again plunged himself in meditation for thousand years.

Then all the celestials and other immortals approached Brahma and said 'The world will be scorched by the fire of his penance unless his prayer is granted. Even the kingdom of Heaven must be given to him if he

and said, "We have been greatly pleased
penance You have attained Brahmanhood

You will live long and from this day you
nana" Visvamitra then said, "If I have
hmanhood in truth, together with longevity,
duly acknowledged by Omkar and Bashatkar
das and by Vasistha, Brahman's son, the
ongst those learned in the Vedas and in the
Veda, or I shall again devote myself to
and penance

the request of the Gods, friendship was
een Vasistha and Visvamitra and the Gods in
ared Visvamitra a Brahman¹ Thus Visva-
ned Brahmanhood He is the foremost of
nd is like the embodiment of religion itself
id Satananda King Janaka then expressed
le for Visvamitra's presence in his sacrifice,
d him warm hospitality

tra—like Vasistha, a great Vedic Rishi and is the
any famous hymns and Mantras of the Rig Veda

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE GREAT BOW

On the following morning after greeting Maharshi Kauhik with Ram and Lakshman Janaka said "Tell me now what is your pleasure. I am at your command."

Vishvamitra replied "These two famous Kshatriya princes want to see the formidable bow kept in your palace. You will be pleased to show it to them."

Janaka then said "Please first of all listen to the history of the bow. In ancient times at the time of Daksha's sacrifice the God Siva in wrath wanted to destroy the Gods for depriving him his due share of the sacrifice. The Gods then in fear began to pray to Siva to appease his wrath. Siva then being pacified by their prayers made over the bow to the Gods. The Gods then gave the bow as a trust to my forefather King Devarat the eldest son of Nimi. Since that time the bow is with us."

One day as I was ploughing the ground for sacrifice at the time of the turning of the ploughshare I found a girl. I got her in clearing the field for sacrifice. This earth-born child

to put string to this bow of Hara. In course
 she has attained her marriageable age. Many
 princes came to use for her hand but since
 her marriage dowry I have not conferred her
 one of them. Kings came to inspect the Hara's
 also showed them the bow, but they could
 not raise the bow or put string to it. The kings
 at their discomfiture grew angry and they in-
 vaded Mithila for carrying away my daughter.
 I resisted them from inside the fortress for
 a long time, after which my resources were at an end.
 I was greatly despondent at this and prayed to the
 Lord. Then the Gods, in their mercy, gave me an
 arrow which again renewed my fight with the kings,
 at the end, those wicked princes ran away from
 me after sustaining a heavy defeat. I shall now
 give the eventful bow to Ram and Lakshman and if
 they put string to that bow I shall confer my daugh-
 ter on him." Then Maharshi Kaushik asked Janaka to
 give the bow to Ram.

Janaka ordered his counsellors and men to
 take Siva's bow, adorned with garlands and sandal
 paste. The bow was placed in an iron box on an eight-
 wheeled carriage. It was drawn with difficulty by
 a team of stalwart men.

Janaka said, "This bow was worshipped by my
 ancestors. Not to speak of man nor even the celestials
 could draw the bow or put string to it."

Kaushik said to Ram, "My child, behold the bow."

Ram then taking out the lid of the case saw the bow and examined it with his hand. He then asked what he would do with the bow. Would he raise it and bend it then and there? On Janaka's and the sages' replying in the affirmative Rama, at ease, took up the bow and began to bend it in order to put a string to it and the bow was broken into two pieces with a thundering crash and the whole place shook as if in an earthquake. And all except Visvamitra Janak Ram and Lakshman, fell unconscious on the ground!

Then all doubts about Janaki's marriage were removed from Janak's heart.

Janak then addressing Visvamitra in folded hands said: I have witnessed the prowess and valour of Dasarath's son Ram. It is an astonishing feat. I never dreamt that such a thing could happen. Now my family will be famous by the union of Sita with Ram. Now my promise has been fulfilled and I want to marry Sita to Ram. So please permit me to send envoys to Ayodhya and fetch King Dasarath with due honours and respect and also to send him the news that Ram and Lakshman are safe.

Visvamitra gave his assent. Janaka then summoned his men and sent them to Ayodhya with a letter communicating everything therein.

The envoys of Janak reached Ayodhya after great

mortal, they began in a sweet and gentle voice, , Janak, the King of Mithila, with his coun- priests repeatedly enquires after the welfare d of your staff and followers And with permission the King of Mithila addresses you ou know the vow that I took formerly that er my daughter on him who would succeed in he bow, which had baffled the efforts of so s previously But that daughter of mine has by your son, who has arrived here with a O mighty king, that heavenly bow has been to two pieces in the presence of a large assembly I shall confer on high-souled Ram my Sita, is way I wish to be absolved from my vow, for rave your kind permission You therefore, be ough to arrive here speedily with your priests. es you to see me absolved from my vow, and ress the marriage of your sons Thus the lord of permitted by Visvamitra asked us to communi- ou

ing these words of the envoys Dasarath was gly glad and readily consented to the proposal, all praised the king for his decision The king erfully said, "Our journey begins even from ow"

n the night was over, Dasarath spoke to Suman- at the officers in charge of the royal treasury take of money and jewels, and start in advance under escort Let the army march Let Vasistha,

Vamdev Javali Kasyapa Markandeya and Katyayana and other Brahmans start on horseback or in palanquins Janak's envoys asked me to start quickly you therefore yoke the horses to my chariot."

King Dasarath then started after due preparations and his army followed him in march. After four days journey all arrived at Mithila.

On Dasarath's arrival Janak after according him a warm welcome said Had you a safe journey? It is my good luck that has brought you here. Now you enjoy the pleasure of seeing your two sons married. I am also grateful for Maharshi Vasistha's presence surrounded by the priests as Indra by the Gods. Now to my good luck all obstacles in the path of my daughter's marriage have been removed. I feel myself fortunate in having an alliance with the line of Raghu. To-morrow morning after the completion of the sacrifice you perform the marriage ceremony along with the saints and priests."

Dasarath said I have heard that a gift should be ratified by acceptance. So what you say will be accomplished."

Then they passed the night merrily. Next morning, Janak said to his priest Satanand that he wanted to have his brother Kushadhwaja living in the city of

CHAPTER XXXVIII

RAM'S MARRIAGE

By effulgent Janak and his brother Kushadhwaja, taken their seats asked minister Sudamana to bring Dasarath with his sons and counsellors with all honour due to their high rank. Sudamana then went to Dasarath's camp and invited him to come to Janak's palace. Thereupon King Dasarath with his priests and ministers went there. Dasarath then addressing Janak said, "Vasistha is our family priest. With the permission of Maharshi Visvamitra and other sages he will tell to you the genealogy of my line."

Then Vasistha began, "O King! From the Eternal Brahman who is beyond the range of human perception and exists above all proofs or inference, has come the adorable God Brahma. Brahma's son is Marichi, Kashyapa was born of Marichi, Kashyapa's son is Vivasvat, Vivasvat's son was born of Vivasvat and this Manu is known as Prajapati. Manu's son was Ikshwaku. This Ikshwaku was the first King of Ayodhya. Ikshwaku's son named Kukshi. Kukshi's son was Vikukshi, Vikukshi's son was mighty Vana. Vana's son was Anaranya. Anaranya's son Prithu and Prithu's son was Trisanku. Trisanku had a son called Dhundhumar who was a famous king. Dhundhumar's son was Yuvanashwa, Yuvanashwa's son Mandhata. Mandhata's son was Sandhi. Susandhi had two sons, Dhruvasandhi and

Prasanjit. Famous Bharat was born of Dhruvasandhu. Bharat's son was Asita. Haihayas, Talajanghas and Sasavindas rose against Asita and defeated and crushed Asita who fled to the Himalayas with his two queens and he died after sometime. It is said that both of his queens were pregnant and each of the queens administered poison to the other to destroy the foetus. In that mountain lived sage Chyavan son of Bhrigu. Asita's wife Kalindi went to Saint Bhargava and prayed for the birth of a son. Bhargava was pleased and said that a mighty and beautiful son would be born along with poison.

Kalindi was a widow and in due time delivered a beautiful boy along with the poison that had been administered by her co-wife. The boy was named Sagar as he was born with poison. Sagar's son was Asamanja, and Asamanja's son was Anshuman. Anshuman's son Dilip and Dilip's son Bhagirath. Bhagirath's son was Kakustha and Kakustha's son was Raghu. Raghu's son was Provindhra. He was turned to a carnivorous Rakshasa. He was afterwards known as Kalmashpada. Kalmashpada's son was Sankhan. Sankhan's son was Sudarsan and Sudarsan's son was Agnivarman. Agnivarman's son Shighraga and Shighraga's son was Maru. Maru's son Proshusruk, and Proshusruka's son was Ambarish.

Nahusha was born of Ambarish, and Nahusha's son was Yayati. Yayati's son Nabha and Nabha's son

THE RAMAYAN

in are the sons of King Dasarath They are
 virtuous and mighty and for them we solicit
 o daughters You bestow your daughters on
 bridegrooms”

c Vasistha's word, king Janak in folded palms
 t the time of daughter's marriage it is the duty
 rson born in a noble family to speak of his
 y So kindly listen to the genealogy of my line
 uled a mighty king named Nimi Nimi's son
 hi, and Mithi's son was Janak and from him all
 cendants born in our line are called Janaka.
 son was Udavasu, Udavasu's son Nandivardhan
 , son was Suketu Suketu's son was mighty
 t Devarat's son was Vrihadratha, and his son was
 i, and Sudhriti's son was virtuous Dhristaketu
 ketu's son was Haryashwa Haryashwa's son
 Maru's son Pratindhak, Pratindhak's son Kirtira-
 d his son was Devamirha Devamirha's son
 ia. Vivudha's son Mahidhraka Mahidhraka's
 rtirata, and Kirtirata's son was Maharoman
 oman's son, Swarnaroman and his son was Hras-
 an He had two sons, eldest of the two is myself
 e younger is my brother Kushadhwaja Our aged
 after making over the kingdom and Kushadhwaja
 care retired to the forest where he laid down his
 frame After his demise I am now looking after
 rgdom

er some time, a powerful king named Sudhanwa
 rom Sankshya and demanded the bow of Hara

and Janaki which I refused. Then there was a heavy fight between him and myself in which Sudhanwa was killed and defeated. After Sudhanwa's death I have installed my heroic brother Kushadhwaja to the throne of Sankshya. Now I shall confer my two daughters in a contented mind—nymph-like beautiful Sita on Ram and my second daughter Urmila on Lakshman. Do thou O king, perform the ceremony of Godana and offer oblations to the manes of your ancestors for Ram and Lakshman's marriage. To-day the inauspicious star Magha is in ascendant on the third day the marriage will be celebrated under the auspices of the Uttara Phalguni star. Now for the future good of Ram and Lakshman give away in charity cattle and gold.

Then Saint Visvamitra with Vasistha's leave said, "No other clan can be compared with that of Ikshwaku or Videha. This union between Ram and Sita and Lakshman and Urmila is desirable in every respect. Now I have something to say, please listen to my words. Your virtuous brother Kushadhwaja has got two beautiful daughters, we solicit them for Bharat and Satrughna. All the sons of king Dasharath are handsome and valiant as the God. So do not hesitate for a moment." At this Janaka addressing Visvamitra—
hands said, "I am..."

" Then addressing saint Vasistha, Janaka that like king Dasarath henceforward he and his would also be counted as disciples of Vasistha Dasarath was immensely pleased with Janak's and after good wishes he repaired to his camp to perform the Sraddha rites of his ancestors. On the following day King Dasarath performed the Godana (gift ceremony) by giving away four lakhs of cows with horns covered in gold. Each with its calf and a metal vessel for milking it.

On the day of the Godana ceremony, Bharat's maternal uncle, Yudhajit, son of Kekaya, appeared before him and informed him that he came to see Bharat, and to find him in Ayodhya. King Dasarath warmly received the honorable guest.

The following morning Dasarath headed by priests and saints entered the sacrificial ground. Then on an auspicious moment called Vijaya, Ram appeared before him. With him were the other sages accompanied by his sons, adorned with various ornaments who had all performed the rites appertaining to the marriage. When Vasistha coming to Janaka informed him that Dasarath, after performing the prenuptial rites, was waiting at the gate with his sons. At this Vaideha said, "Who is at the gate that the King is waiting for his son? He can easily enter his own house. O my son! My daughters after performing all the auspicious rites pertaining to the marriage, are waiting at the foot of the altar like flames of fire, and I am expect-

ing you at every moment. Now perform the ceremony without delay."

Dasarath then entered with his sons. And Vasistha spoke to Vidha, "O master now perform the marriage ceremony of Ram the darling of all. Then Vasistha with Satananda and Viswamitra constructed an altar according to the injunctions of the Shastras. It was decked all round with scented flowers and painted war-pots, with ears of barley attached to them golden ladles sprays cups and censers with incense burning in them conches spoons, wrathes vases, Arghyas, fried paddy and akshatas dyed with turmeric juice were arranged round the altar. Vasistha with mantras spread Durvas (grass) of equal length on the altar. Then he duly lighted the sacrificial fire and made offerings to it. Then bringing Sita richly adorned with ornaments and jewels and placing her before Ram and the sacrificial fire King Janaka said "O Ram! Sita is my daughter and from this day she becomes your partner in life. Take her by the hand good will be to you. Let her be chaste and devoted and she will follow you like your own shadow." Saying this, Janaka spread holy waters sanctified by mantras into Ram's hand. The Gods and saints praised the union. Kettle drums began to be played. flowers were profusely showered.

After

trughna said, "You take Srutakirti Do not be united with your wives."

the four sons of Dasarath taking the hands of the brides in their own, went round the sacrifice at the altar, King Janaka and other saints. The ceremony was thus performed Heavenly beings heard from above and flowers were showered from the sky Then Dasarath's sons went round the altars and afterwards with their wives retired to their apartments.

The following morning, saint Viswamitra after bidding Dasarath and Janaka repaired to the Himalayas. King Dasarath, too, made arrangements for the journey to Ayodhya King Janak then gave many gifts of cows and a number of fine blankets, heaps of treasure, well adorned elephants, horses, infantry as well as honour, and profuse gold, silver, pearls, ruby and emerald as dowries to his daughters He also gave a large number of servants and maids of honour to each of his daughters.

King Dasarath with his sons and armies started for the north. After sometime the birds began to utter cries in the sky and the beasts on land began to move towards the south At these ominous signs Dasarath asked Vasistha what it indicated and his heart trembling with dark apprehensions. Vasistha assured him that the cries of the birds were ominous but the movement in which the beasts were going was assuring of success. When they were thus engaged in conversation

suddenly a furious storm broke out and it uprooted mighty trees by its violence. The sun was hid in utter darkness ss.

Nothing could be seen in that pitch darkness. Soldiers were blinded by a cloud of dust and began to stumble on the ground.

At that hour only saint Vasistha and other sages, and King Dasarath with his sons retained their composure.

At that moment the Destroyer of the Kshatriyas, the son of Bhrigu, Jamadagni with matted locks and axe on his shoulder holding in his hands sharp arrows and a shining bow appeared on the spot like Byomkesh the slayer of Tripura Asura. King Dasarath saw Jamadagni unassailable as the Kailas mountain, unbearable as the Doomed by fire burning with his own fire and incapable of being looked at by the unrighteous.

At his sight, Vasistha and other Brahmins talked amongst themselves, Would the son of Bhrigu enraged at the death of his father again exterminate the Kshatriyas? Would he again be engaged in the act of destruction?

The Rishis then greeted the son of Jamadagni with Arghyas and sweet words. Ram too accepted their offerings of worship.

CHAPTER XXXIX

RAM AND PARASHURAM

uram then addressing Ram, the son of Dasarath, "I have heard of thy valour and also about using of the bow. I have, therefore, come hither with another bow. First of all, give proof of your skill by fixing an arrow to this formidable bow of my father. If you succeed in that I shall fight a duel with

king Dasarath with a sad look said, "You are a Kshatriya, your wrath has amply been gratified by destroying the Kshatriyas, so please do not threaten the Kshatriyas. You are born in the virtuous line of the Bhargavas, and you observe the observance of vows and the study of the Vedas."

You have renounced arms with a vow in the name of Indra, and adopting a life of renunciation you have offered the Earth on Kashyapa, and retired to the Himalaya hill. Now have you come for my ruin, for if anything happens to Ram I shall surely die."

Without paying heed to Dasarath's words the sage Amadagni addressing Ram said

"These two formidable bows have been made by me with great care. One of the two at the time of the destruction of Tripura Asura, the Gods gave to Ram. The other I gave to Parashuram. But, O Kakustha, you have snapped the first bow. The second one was given to Vishnu. Once upon a time the Gods wanted to ascertain who

was more powerful between Vishnu and Siva and with that intent they fomented a quarrel between the two. Then there took place a formidable contest between the two. Then Vishnu uttered a roar which rendered the bow of Siva quite soft and useless and thereupon Mahadeva remained inert and listless.

"Gods then acknowledged Vishnu as the more powerful of the two and they prayed for peace at which the contending Gods were pacified. Then Rudra made over the bow to Ravana the Dvarat of Videha. This bow of Vishnu was made over to Bhishma's son Rishika and Rishika gave it to my father Jamadagni. And when my father renounced that bow sinful Arjuna the ruler of Hastin killed my father. Hearing of this sad death of my father I destroyed the Kshatriyas in anger. Then after conquering the whole world I gave it to Kashyapa as Dakshina¹ after the sacrifice. Having made this gift I repaired to the Mahendra Hill but hearing of your snatching the Siva's bow I have directed my steps hither. O Ram! You are conversant with the code of Kshatriya gallantry. You take this excellent bow and put on shafts to it and if you succeed I shall fight a duel with you."

Hearing these words, Ram on account of his father's presence gently said, O hero! I have heard of your heroic exploit to avenge your father's death. Honourable revenge is worthy of a hero and so I acknowledge your

arding me weak I shall never brook this Thou
ss my prowess to-day "

this, Ram in anger took up Bhrigu's bow toge-
the arrows and then fixing a shaft in the bow

Jamadagni's son said, "You are a Brahman
ally for Viswamitra you are an object of my
I, therefore, refrain from aiming this fatal
you Of the two alternatives your aerial
the high state attained by your asceticism tell
one shall I destroy ?"

, the bow in Ram's hand the celestials assembled
to witness his wonderful trial of strength and
resence Jamadagni's power passed to Ram At
adagni became powerless and kept steadily eying

Parashuram gently said, "When I gave away
to Kashyapa, he told me no longer to remain
ominions According to those words, since then
ever spent a night on Earth O Kakustha, there-
should not destroy my unrestrained power of
on I shall now retire to the Mahendra Hill,
roy with that arrow the regions I have acquired
sceticism The moment you have taken up the
ve recognised you to be the Purushottam him-
indesluctible Vishnu May good betide you
matchless in the world You are Lord of the
orlds There is nothing to be ashamed of at my
n your hands. You withdraw that formidable
I let me repair to the Mahendra Hill "

At these words, Ram shot the arrow and it destroyed the regions earned by Parashuram's austerities. The whole sky then at once became clear. The celestials and saints praised Ram for his valour. Parashuram honoured Ram by going round him and then went towards the Mahendra Hill.

After Jamadagni's departure Ram made over the Vaishnavi bow to Varun the Lord of waters, and addressing his father stupefied with fear said, "Father! Jamadagni is gone so let our army now march towards Ayodhya."

King Dasarath was greatly relieved at these words and he embracing Ram in affection, smelt his head again and again considered the whole thing as a second birth after death.

King Dasarath then reached Ayodhya with his army. The streets of Ayodhya were watered and decked with beautiful floral decorations and banners and flagstuffs, and began to be resounded with the notes of trumpets. Citizens were standing with auspicious things in their hands. There were immense crowds everywhere. Every face brightened at the sight of the King.

Then the citizens and the Brahmans flocked out of the city to receive the King and Dasarath entered his favourite palace snow white as the Himalayas. Then the Queens, Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi with auspicious ceremonies received the brides clad in silk and sanctified by sacrificial fire. They took the brides inside the palace and made them bow to the household deities and to persons deserving respect.

After the auspicious rites and reception were over the brides retired to seclusion and enjoyed there the

at his maternal uncle Yudhajit had come there
 in to the place of the King Kekayas. At this
 together with Satrugna departed for their
 uncle's house with Yudhajit.

the departure of Bharat and Satrugna Ram
 most regard to the wishes of his father always in
 the welfare of the people, and at his instance
 good works were done to the public. Following
 the injunctions of the Sastras Ram observed all the duties
 to his fathers, mothers and other superiors.

Dasarath was exceedingly delighted at this con-
 firmation. The Brahmins, the merchants and other
 grew particularly fond of him. Amongst the
 Dasarath, truthful and mighty Ram was the best
 of all created beings.

great Ram passed twelve years in happiness.
 He was intensely devoted to Sita and Sita too
 could not bear a moment's separation. Royal saint
 bestowed Janaki on Ram according to Brahma
 marriage¹ and Ram became greatly attached to
 her purity and good qualities. Janaki was devotedly
 attached to Ram. Ram understood her heart and Janaki,
 as the goddess Lakshmi, also knew Ram's heart.
 Thus, the Lord of the Gods looked happy and his
 glory enhanced by receiving Kamala, so Ram looked
 charming with extremely beautiful Sita.

THE END OF THE BALAKANDAM

He mentions eight forms of marriage — Brahma, Daiva,
 Asura, Gandharva, Paishacha, Rajaputra, Kula,
 and Ajapathy. The first four are approved forms of marriage. In Brahma marriage the
 bride is given to a bachelor versed in the Veda who is to be sought
 out and invited by the bride's guardian to accept the bride offered to

AYODHYA KANDAM

THE RAMAYAN

AYODHA KANDAM

CHAPTER I

THE NPRO

Bharat at the time of going to his maternal uncle's house took with him affectionate Satrugna the self possessed and the ever-conqueror of his foes. Having received paternal affection there they did not however forget their old father Dasarath too could not forget them even for a moment. All the four sons were dear to him as four arms issuing from the same body yet amongst the four the eldest Ram was the most favourite. Ram too was foremost of the four in all accomplishments.

Ram was Vishnu himself incarnate on earth for the destruction of Ravana. Ram was peerless on earth. He was highly beautiful and free from malice and was qualified like his father. He always addressed the people

words and never used any hard expression even
 ely addressed In the magnanimity of his heart
 forget hundreds of evils done to him but would
 remember even a single act of kindness ever
 In the leisure of his martial exercises, he discuss-
 as with the wise and the aged people. If any-
 ould approach him he would talk to him first
 mmensely powerful but never haughty for that
 truthful, learned and he always honoured the
 am ministered to the welfare of his subjects, and
 le too were deeply fond of him He was friend
 oor, chastiser of the wicked, and well versed in
 and social customs and laws He was worthy of
 and always held the duties of a Kshatriya in high

He never participated in profane and irreverent
 Whenever questioned on anything he answered
 wisely like Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the Gods
 s young, healthy and virtuous, and was dear to
 ople like their another self He mastered the
 and the Vedangas, and was skilful in the use of all
 whether employed with Mantras or not He was
 , candid and the source of all good He never
 ie even in utmost peril He was modest, reserve
 lways respectful towards his superiors He was
 jubilant or angry just for nothing He sought no
 He was free from all idleness and ever vigilant,
 ver ready to scan his own faults He knew the
 of honestly amassing wealth and also to distribute
 the deserving objects of charity He punished or
 ded the people according to the strict rules of

justice. He had aged and pious Brahmins for his guide. He was highly proficient in philosophy and poetry. He knew all the arts of enjoyments but never sought pleasure at the cost of morality. He was an expert rider a great warrior a valiant general who could successfully lead his army against his enemy and was conversant with all the military manouvres for that purpose. He was unconquerable even by the Gods. He was not given to carping, nor was a slave of time. In forbearance he was like the Earth, in intelligence like Vrishaspati and in powers like Indra. Thus accomplished, Ram shone like the noon day sun to the delight of his father and to the benefit of the people. Then the Earth desired excellent Ram as her lord.

Aged Dasarath wished to install such Ram on the throne and he was highly glad at the prospect of seeing his son on the throne. Certainly he is more qualified than myself and dearer to the people than I am" thought the aged king.

CHAPTER II

DASARATH'S WISH

he object of installing Ram on the throne King one day told his counsellors, "I have grown old and the infirmities of age in me. There are pestilences, hurricanes, and much evil is portended by omens and stars. For these reasons I have decided to install Ram on the throne, beautiful like the moon in glory and dear to the people. And I doubt not that the people will be greatly delighted at this."

Dasarath having decided this resolved to celebrate the coronation ceremony. He, therefore, with the help of messengers brought distinguished citizens and chiefs from different provinces, but did not send for Janaka, King of Mithila, nor for the king Kekaya. He expected that they would approve the whole thing when they came to know of it.

At Dasarath's call the obedient chiefs and ministers began to fill the Capital to pay homage to him.

Dasarath then duly summoned them before him. Being seated on his throne and surrounded by obedient princes, Dasarath looked like Indra encircled by the Gods.

Dasarath then addressing the august assembly said in a resonant voice

O men and courtiers! You all know that my

ancestors governed this vast kingdom like affectionate fathers. Now I propose to contribute to the welfare of the people ruled by illustrious Ikshwaku and others. Following the Path of my forefathers, I have so long tried to govern to the best of my ability being heedless of my personal gain. I have grown old under the shade of this white umbrella.¹ I am far advanced in years and I now yearn for rest.

"This heavy responsibility of Government is incapable of being borne even by saintly people. It requires a hero to shoulder such a burden and I have become quite fatigued under its pressing weight. With the permission of all the Brahmans present I intend to take rest by installing my son to the throne. My son heroic Ram, has inherited all my qualities, nay more he is like Indra in prowess. And I propose to invest the crown on virtuous Ram shining like the moon with the constellation of Pushya. He is worthy of you in every respect and the people of the triple world will find a worthy lord in him. I wish to do this good to the world even to-day.

"Now tell me whether my proposal meets with your approval or not? If you think that it is due to my fondness for Ram then advise me what is better. Arbitrators can discern the truth emerging from the discussions and friction of two opposing parties.

Datath scanned and all the princes hailed his

ecstatic joy, and from them rose loud murmurs
The people shook the ground by their loud

the Brahmins, military captains, the princes
citizens consulted together and being unanimous
approval addressing the king said

now your age is now over some thousand years,

have grown old It is, therefore, proper for
install Ram—the heir-apparent—on the throne.
wish to see heroic Ram riding a huge elephant
the royal umbrella

rath then to know their minds said, “Your ready
I, however, raises my doubts While I am still
governing the world why do you want to see Ram
I on the throne ?”

I the citizens and the chiefs replied, “Because
I possesses good many noble qualities and let us
them in your presence

powerful and peerless Ram is like Indra, the king of
He has thus cast into shade even his illustrious
ancestors He is the most truthful man on earth, and
the best of men Virtue and wealth are found
I only in him He delights the people like the
I, in patience and forbearance he is like the Earth
might the Indra himself He is virtuous, true to
his words and free from envy He always consoles the
world He is forgiving, gentle, of sweet speech, and
of a peaceful mind He is beautiful and of subdued heart.
honours old and learned Brahmins He is unparalleled
on earth He is well acquainted with the application

of all the arms that are in use amongst the Gods and giants (Asuras). He has mastered all knowledge and knows the Vedas with all their branches. He is highly proficient in music. He is thoroughly honest and the receptacle of all good. He is never stricken with grief even when there is sufficient cause for it. When occasion arises to fight for the defence of a city or village he never returns from the battle with Lakshman without conquering his foes. When he victoriously returns from the fight either on elephant or on horseback he never forgets in his triumph to enquire to affectionately about the welfare of the people whom he meets in his way. He questions them, as one would do his son, everything concerning their children, wives, servants, pupils and the sacrificial fire. He rejoices in the joy of the people and becomes sad in their sufferings as their fathers would have been.

"He has clung first to religion. All his objects are noble and they always produce good results. When he talks, a smile always hovers on his lips. He has aversions against all sorts of quarrels. He can argue like Vrihaspati the teacher of the Gods. From his graceful brows and large roseate eyes it seems as if Vishnu himself has incarnated on earth. People love him for his heroic qualities. He is never elated with success. Nor to speak of this kingdom, he can take

, rather rewards them profusely. By his
mity, Ram has become an object of reverence
e. Like the great Sun his presence is always
the people O king ! we therefore, pray for
allation of Ram. In fact, like Marichi's son,
a, you have fortunately got such a highly
lished son Everybody in the kingdom, whether
or old, pray for Ram's health, his prosperity and
ty Therefore, O King, for the benefit of all,
the crown on Ram of delicate hue as of a dark
us "

CHAPTER III

ROYAL DIRECTIONS

sarath was mightily pleased at the conduct of his
and chiefs Then King Dasarath said to
eva, Vasistha and other Brahmins

he sacred month of Chaitra is come The forests
lorned with blossoms and buds Now you invest
own on Ram "

t these words there were great shouts of joy
iest Vasistha then addressing the counsellors said,
to-morrow have a sufficient supply of gold and

Collect in the sacrificial hall sacred medicinal
, wreaths of white flowers, fried rice honey,
ied butter, each in a separate vessel, clothes fresh
the loom, fourfold forces, a lucky elephant, a pair

of chowries, a chariot arms, flagstaff umbrella of pale yellow colour golden pitchers, a bull with horns wrapped in gold, an entire tiger skin and other necessary articles. Decorate the palace gate and the entrances to the city with garlands and sandal paste and burn fragrant incense at the gates. Have sufficient supply of food consisting of curd milk clarified butter fried paddy clean and good rice. Feed everyone sumptuously and pay the Brahmans handsomely To-morrow early in the morning, the Brahmans will pronounce their prayer now invite them cordially Set up flags everywhere. Water the streets of the city Let well-adorned dancing girls wait in the second room of the palace. Keep food, flowers, incense and other articles of worship in temples and under sacred trees (Chaitya) Let stalwart warriors clad in armour and with long swords and shields enter the courtyard of the palace in proud march.

After giving these instruction Vasistha and Vamdeva were engaged in priestly duties

King Dasarath then asked Sumantra to fetch Ram in his presence

The rulers of the North, South, East and West together with the Mlechha Aryan princes and Mountain and Forest chiefs paid their homage to Dasarath

It with gems was set apart for Ram Dasarath
 am to sit upon that Thereupon Ram took

Then the throne glittered like the golden
 , gilded by the morning rays of the Sun. As
 on adorns the starry autumnal sky, so Ram
 d the magnificence of the assembly by his
 presence

he sight of his dear son, Dasarath was immensely
 people are delighted in seeing their richly adorned
 on the mirror.

n Dasarath said to Ram

u are born of Kausalya, my first queen You
 ghly qualified and I love you most You are
 of the people . You ascend the throne when
 on will enter the Pushya constellation I know
 e virtuous, yet let me give you some advice.
 h you are modest but be more humble and control
 enses Always replenish your exchequer, arsenal
 ranaries and by justice render yourself dear to
 ople"

e friends of a good ruler are delighted as the Gods
 eased with nectar

en the friends of Ram swiftly went to Kausalya
 ave her this welcome news Kausalya was
 nsely delighted at the news, and bestowed sufficient
 gems and number of cows to the bringers of this
 news

am went back to his place after bowing profoundly
 father's feet

CHAPTER IV

THE PROMOTION

When the citizens were gone King Dasarath said to his ministers,

To-morrow the moon will enter the Pushya constellation and I have decided to install lotus-eyed Ram on that day. Turning to Sumantra he said, Again bring in Ram hither.

Sumantra then quickly went to Ram and Ram asked about the reason of his coming and on being told that the king wanted to see him again Ram hastily went to the king.

After entering the palace Ram seeing his father from distance bowed to him with clasped palms. King then raised him from the ground and after embracing him affectionately asked him to take his seat.

Dasarath then addressing Ram said, O Ram ! After long enjoyment of life I have grown old. I have been emancipated from my debts to the Gods, saints, ancestors, Brahmans and to the self. To-day I make over to you the charge of my people. But I had a very evil dream as if there were terrible thunders and meteors were shooting in the day. Astrologers were giving out that the Sun, Mars and the Rahu have encroached upon my star of birth. When such inauspicious

and. To-day, the Moon has entered the Punarvasu and it will enter the Pushya to-morrow. I am eager to confer on you the crown, and I bestow it on you with that to-morrow. Therefore, passing the night lying on a bed of Kusha-grass with my daughter-in-law by observing fast and other sacred restrictions. There are many hindrances to a good act, so your friends guard you this night. I wish to invest you with the crown during Bharat's absence, so that his crown may not be stained by envy. I know he is devoted but yet human mind is inconstant and undergoes changes when there is any cause for it. Events of the virtuous are changed and disturbed by anger, malice and other strong passions. You now, Bharat, To-morrow you will have to take charge of the kingdom."

He then went and in order to inform Janaki about her father's behest Ram entered his room but missing him there he went to the quarters of his mother.

At that time Kausalya having heard the news of the installation to the throne, has entered the hall in company with Sumitra, Sita and Lakshman, and being attended by Sumitra, Lakshman, and Sita she bowed to the Eternal Spirit. She was absorbed in deep meditation with closed eyes and suspended breath. On going there Ram found his mother clad in silk and standing in prayer for his welfare.

When addressing his mother, Ram said, "Mother! My father has entrusted the kingdom to me and the coro-

nation ceremony takes place to-morrow. He has asked me and Janaki to observe fast this night. You then arrange for all things that will be required for Janaki to-morrow."

Kausalya blessed Ram cheerfully. "May you live long. May you conquer your enemies. May you prosper to the delight of the friends of mine and of Sumitra. I am fortunate that I bore thee in my womb. This day all my supplications to Lord Hari have been fulfilled. Royal splendour will ever cling to thee."

Lakshman was seated there in clasped hands and casting his eyes on him Ram said, "Lakshman hence forward you will have to share the burden of the kingdom along with me. You are my second self. My life and kingdom are meant for you. So enjoy yourself as you like."

Thus after greeting Kausalya, Sumitra and Lakshman Ram went to his quarters.

CHAPTER V

THE JOY

Dasarath asked Vasistha to give necessary directions to Ram and Sita. Saintly Vasistha then arrived at Ram's residence. It looked from distance like a mass of amber

With permission entered his quarters which, at that
 the joyous faces looked like a lake with full blown
 and resounding with the notes of joyous birds

Vasistha on emerging from Ram's palace found the
 crowded with men. People were going in batches
 there were constant shouts of joy, like the roaring of

All the places were filled up to their utmost
 extent. All the highways were swept and watered
 and hung on every gate and flags were streaming
 from every house. The whole city was anxiously waiting
 in the morning to witness the Coronation Ceremony
 and wore a gay, festive look

Vasistha waded his way through that sea of human
 and entered the castle high as a mountain peak
 (at) and appeared before the king as Vrihaspati
 before Indra

The King stood up from the throne at Vasistha's
 Vasistha then informed the King that all his direc-
 tions had been carried out

Dasarath then with Vasistha's permission entered the
 apartment as a lion enters his den in a mountain
 Just as the moon shines in the midst of a galaxy
 so Dasarath appeared in the midst of the pearl-
 and beauties of his palace

When Vasistha was gone Ram took his bath and wor-
 shipped Narayan, and offered oblations with clarified
 butter into fire and then partook its remainder. He
 lay down in collected mind with Sita on a bed of
 within the precincts of that Vishnu's shrine.

When about two hours of night yet remained Ram left his bed and asked his men to decorate his house. At that time he was greeted by the chants and songs of the bards. He put on a silken dress and said his prayers to Narayan and had the Brahmans perform the Swastika chan rite. The whole city resounded with the blares of trumpets and the deep voice of the Brahmans hailing the dawn.

All the citizens then rejoiced at the news that Ram had fasted with Janaki.

Then the citizens began to decorate the whole city. Flagstuffs with fluttering banners were raised from all temples high as the peaks and white as the fleecy clouds. They were raised in every crossing and they streamed from every housetop from every rich mansion and from every shop full of merchandise and every tall road-side tree and Chaitya were decorated with flags and ribbands. Streets were decorated with floral wreathes and became fragrant with the sweet scent of incense. The people feasted their eyes and ears with songs and dancing performed by the musicians. Thinking that Ram might inspect the city at night, after his coronation the people by way of decoration, reared up lamp-posts in the shape of trees, and they began to discuss about Ram's coronation even the children in groups when they were playing before their house-doors talked of that. People in knots were praising Dasarath for his noble decision in installing Ram on the throne. At last, Ayodhya resembling like a heavenly city became loud with the huzza

CHAPTER VI

MANTHARA

She brought up an orphan girl whom she
her maternal uncle's house Her name
and she served Kaikeyi as her maid
morning Manthara ascended the terrace
white as the moon-light, to ascertain the
unusual noise and demonstrations in the

street of Ayodhya sprinkled with sweet-
water and strewn with red lotuses and
garlands and festoons Some roads led through
groves and some were wide for the facility of
travel and all were well-watered, and the
people making noise with garlands and sweets
She found the doorway of every temple,
and the streets resounded with music,
the Vedas and shouts of the people Horses
were briskly plying along the streets.
She was greatly surprised at the sight and approach-
ing in white questioned

Queen Kausalya is making such charities in
What is the cause of this great delight
that the King will do to-day ?"

She cheerfully replied, "To-day the King will
ascend the throne."

Manthara hearing these words of the nurse
took a flaming log, and hurriedly descending

from the terrace she entered the room of Kaikeyi and addressing her in a reproachful voice said.

Arise you foolish one why you are still lying on your bed? You know not what calamity is about to fall on you. You boast of your good fortune while you are neglected by the king! Your good fortune is as short-lived as the waters of a summer stream.

Having heard these hard expressions of Manthara delivered in passion Kaikeyi sorrowfully asked "Manthara! What evil has happened? Why do you look so much distressed?"

Then Manthara assuming an air of deeper sorrow in angry eloquence said "O lady a great danger is imminent. The King will install Ram on the throne. I don't see any remedy for it. My heart is overwhelmed with grief and anger and my limbs are burning as if with a flame. I have come here for your good. know it for certain that I always grieve in your sorrows and delight in your joys. You are a queen and the daughter of a King. Why do you not therefore appreciate the loss of sovereignty? Your husband is of fair speech but has a crooked heart. His words are sweet but heart is full of gall. You know such a man to be truthful and honest you have therefore been thus deceived. The king only cozens with sweet words but he fulfils the desire of Kausalya. This crafty king has sent away Bharat to his maternal uncle's house for conferring safely the kingdom on Ram. You are awfully silly and disregarding your own weal and interest and as an affectionate mother you

your lap an enemy as fell as a deadly
 it is done by a snake or enemy when left
 committed to your son by Dasaratha All
 consolation are vain, he is going to ruin
 instead of investing the crown on Ram The
 or quick decision and to act for your own
 yourself, Bharat and myself from this
 r "

She rose from her bed with a smiling
 beautiful as the moon, and hearing the
 coronation, in gladsome heart rewarded
 ornaments, and then addressing her, she
 'What a piece of good news you have
 day ! Tell me what shall I give you for
 s ? Darling Ram and Bharat are both
 and I have been more delighted at the news
 , going to install Ram on the throne To
 with, there is not a happier news to me
 bless you, Manthara, for conveying that
 tell me what is your prayer and I shall
 grant you that "

When being beside herself with grief and
 the ornaments on the floor and maliciously

Why do you display your delight on such
 occasion like this ? Don't you see that you
 hasten into a sea of sorrow ? Though over-
 grief I cannot but laugh at your silliness in
 rejoicing in your calamity Which intelligent

woman can rejoice at the prosperity of her co-wife's son unwelcome as death itself? I am sorry for your foolish perverseness. All the brothers have equal claim to the throne. Therefore Ram is afraid of Bharat but know it that Ram may be the cause of Bharat's mischief.

Heroic Lakshman is devoted to Ram so he is not afraid of Lakshman. Likewise Satrughna is devoted to Bharat, Ram has nothing to fear from Satrughna. In sequence of birth Bharat may encroach upon the throne, but the case is different with Lakshman and Satrughna. Ram is vigilant, learned conversant in the arts of peace and war and well versed in kingly duties. Ram will surely do mischief to Bharat, and this thought is now uppermost in my mind. Queen Kausalya is fortunate. Her son's coronation ceremony will be celebrated to-day. The Kingdom now belongs to her. You will serve her with clasped hands as her maid. Like you, we shall be her maid-servants and Bharat will be a valet to Ram. Sita will enjoy herself with her maids of honour and your daughter-in-law will pass her days in sorrow seeing Bharat thus humbled. Finding Manthara thus averse to Ram Kaikeyi gently recounted the accomplishments of Ram in her presence.

Manthara, darling Ram is virtuous, accomplished, well educated, truthful, greatful and of pure character. He is the eldest son of the King, and the kingdom rightly belongs to him. My long lived Ram will minister to the welfare of his brothers and of the people with parental care. Then why do you grieve at this news? Bharat

er's kingdom a hundred years after Ram
n burn with your own fire on this festive
ways wish for the good of Ram as I do
son Ram, too, loves and honours me
es his own mother

kingdom now belongs to Ram yet it is
rat's, for Ram loves his brothers as his

men heaved a deep sigh of grief and said

1 It is really strange that you would re-
an evil what is really good for you You
engulfed in troubles and sorrows, but
foolishness you do not realise your own
is now going to be the King, after him his
d the throne Bharat will therefore be cut
om the royal line All the sons of a King
d to the kingdom Had it been so there
een great social and political disorders.
ie sovereigns invest their crowns either
sons or upon the most accomplished ones
ustom I therefore tell you that Bharat will
hed from the line of the sovereigns, conse-
all prosperity and happiness It is for your
n taking such pains I am sorry you do not
e, on the other hand, you want to reward
ws of prosperity of your co-wife's son 1
ertain that Ram after safely ascending the
ther send Bharat into exile or put him to

death. Bharat is still a boy he is quite innocent of everything, and it is you that have sent him to his maternal uncle's house. Had Bharat been present at his time, certainly the king could not have been unkind to him. Attachment grows by close proximity. Look! Even the trees, creepers and shrubs embrace one another in close proximity of space. Not only Bharat is not present but even Satrugna has gone with him. Had he been present there could have been some remedy. I have heard that once a batch of foresters wished to cut down a tree but it was saved being surrounded with thorny shrubs. Know it that no injury will be done by Lakshman but surely Ram will deprive Bharat of his life. Now let Bharat proceed to the forest from his maternal uncle's house. This seems to me to be the only desirable alternative and this will do good to you and to your friends.

Ah, Darling Bharat! You have been brought up in the lap of happiness, now Ram is your enemy. His prosperity is your downfall. O save Bharat from his danger! Ram's mother Kausalya is your co-wife. You have neglected her being elated by the caress of your husband. Don't forget that she will now wreck her vengeance on you. What shall I say more? If Ram gets this vast kingdom with the hills and the seas, he will surely insult you along with your son. Now devise the ways and means how Bharat can be installed to the throne and Ram may be sent away in exile!

At this the wrath of Kaikeyi was up and she exclaimed in panting breath. Manthara this very day I shall

exile and invest the crown on Bharat.
how can I achieve my object "

and Manthara replied "I am telling you
which the kingdom will be Bharat's Just
whether you approve of them or not
remember what so often you had repeated to
me you wish to hear it from my own lips ?"

she raised herself a little from her luxuri-
ous bed, "Tell me now Manthara, by what
will I gain the kingdom and not Ram ?"

She returned, "O Queen ! there is a city
called Mithila in Dandakaranya in the South There
was an Asura named Timidvaja, otherwise known
as Ravana. There was a war between him and Indra.
Between the gods and the demons, king
Indra with other royal saints went to help Indra
and you accompanied the king at that time
Ravana fought most bravely and received
a wound over the body Once he fainted in the
battle seeing him thus fainted, you removed him
from the battlefield and thus saved his life The King
was highly pleased with you promised you two
daughters you then said that you would ask for them
to be shed and the King agreed to your proposal.
I have said nothing about it, but I have heard it
from your own lips but I have not forgotten it Now
the installation of Ram and pray for Ram's exile
for fourteen years and the installation of Bharat on
the throne if Ram goes to the forest for fourteen years

your son Bharat will be able to secure his position by winning half the people on his side. Go now put on dirty rags on your person, enter the chamber of wrath and lie down there on the naked floor. But take care when the king comes to you don't look to him don't talk to him but go on weeping incessantly. I know the King loves you dearly he can even enter into fire for you. He will never dare to offend you or provoke your wrath. He can sacrifice his life for your pleasure. Never think that he will set aside your words. Now you think of your luck. I warn you again, never to accept gold and jewels what the king may offer you to appease your anger. Don't be tempted by them. You just remind the King of the two boons he had promised you in the war between the Gods and the demons, and always remain on the alert to gain object. When the King will raise you from the ground for granting your prayers, first make him swear and then speak out your mind. O lady! Bharat's weal will be attained by Ram's exile. In his exile the people will lose their love for Ram and Bharat will then reign undisturbed and by the time Ram returns back Bharat will be darling of the people. So be bold in your insistence. This is the time to dissuade the King from his decision."

Manthara thus succeeded in persuading Kaikeyi to accept the evil as truth, and Kaikeyi gladly agreed to her words. She, at the instigation of Manthara, betook a wrong path, like a mare springing after her young colt and addressing Manthara said,

You have spoken the right thing. I admire your

intelligence you are the best of all hump-ways wish me good and are devoted to my well the truth, I could not first understand sign of the king. Oh Manthara ! Here are and ugly-crooked persons on earth but you stand out among them like a lotus bent by the plump and heaving breast, graceful navel, gracious hips adorned with thinking-zones beautiful like the moon. How well-shaped thighs are ! You are tall, and when you walk like veritable swan. You have all the policy of Sambar Ashur in you. Policy and wisdom reside in your heart. Oh beauty ! If I can overthrow the forest and install Bharat to the throne, I will anoint your hump with sandal paste and adorn you with ornaments of gold, and shall give you golden rate your face. Being clad in elegant dress with beautiful ornaments you will walk like a lotus and your lotus-face will defy the beauty of the sun. You will rise in eminence to the disappointment of your enemies, and as you now attend on me, I will wait upon you."

Sita was lying on her bed, like a flame of the sacrificial altar, thus praised Manthara concluded by saying, "Oh Lady ! it is useless to build a dam when the water has already flowed out. Do not grieve and exert yourself for your welfare. Enter my chamber soon and show your anger to the

Being thus incited by Manthara gold-coloured Kaikeyi entered the chamber of wrath and throwing down the precious pearl necklace and other jewelleries from her person she sat down on the floor and said, Oh Manthara ! Either I shall die or shall install Bharat on the throne. I have no hankering for anything else and I assure you that if the king invest the crown on Ram I will put an end to my life.

Then Manthara said 'Surely along with your son you will have to rue if the kingdom goes to Ram. So try your level best to secure it for Bharat.

Thus being repeatedly provoked by Manthara Kaikeyi by placing her hand on her agitated breast, said Manthara ! If I die in this chamber of wrath you carry that news to the king, or you will hear that Ram has been sent to exile and Bharat has got the throne. If Ram does go to the forest, I have no more any need of luxury, nay not even of my life.

Kaikeyi after speaking out her mind in these cruel words lay down on the ground like a fallen angel. Her beautiful face was dark with anger and her body being stripped of all ornaments appeared like the starless sky of a gloomy night. Thus Kaikeyi lay down with a smothered heart.

CHAPTER VII

THE CHAMBER OF WRATH

er of wrath Kaikeyi then began to heave
nting snake For sometime she thought
t of her happiness and after deciding
ction, she spoke it to Manthara, and her
as glad at this.

keyi lay down with frowning brows and
nger The ground being strewn with her
ornaments (which she had cast off) shone
ally firmament.

atime king Dasarath after giving necessary
the installation of Ram entered the inner
of his palace Thinking that Kaikeyi has
d the gladsome news of Ram's coronation,
ikeyi's quarters to convey that happy news,
 unwittingly enters the white clouds in the
frightful by the presence of the Rahu¹ in
atha saw hump-backed and other dwarfish
ing about hither and thither At some
palace parrots, peacocks, Kraunchas and
ackling in joy Somewhere sweet musical
like lyre and flute are being played There
ful groves and painted houses interspersed
earing fruits and flowers all round the year.

dow of the earth that is cast upon the moon at the
pse was called Rahu

There stood tall Champaka and red Asoka trees. There were raised platforms and seats of ivory gold and silver. In some parts there were beautiful ponds and lakes. Rich food and drink were stored and other precious stones. After entering the inner apartment¹ which looked like an earthly paradise. He was at that time under the influence of passion. Dasaratha missed Kaikeyi in her bedchamber. Formerly Kaikeyi never stayed out at that time.

Dasaratha did not know that Kaikeyi was intent upon Bharat's installation. Finding Kaikeyi not in her room he, as on previous occasions, enquired of a warder about her and the warder with a sacred look and clasped hands said that the queen being angry had entered the chamber of wrath.

At these words Dasaratha grew highly anxious and entered the chamber of wrath with an agitated heart. On entering, Dasaratha found her lying on the ground who was wont to on milk-white downy beds. His heart at this sight began to be consumed with sorrow. The old King seeing his beloved youthful wife lying on the ground, like an up-rooted creeper like a goddess hurled down from the heaven, like an illusion to bewitch one's heart, like a doe caught in a trap, or like an elephant struck down by a hunter's shaft, was taken by painful surprise.

1. It does not mean a Harem for there was no such thing at that time. It is purely a Mohammedan institution introduced to India after the Mahomedan conquest. It simply means a quarter occupied by the ladies.

pat on her body out of affection and

ed King addressing the lotus-eyed beauty,
 why you are angry, I know nothing of its
 , insulted or dared to abuse you ? Why
 ne unhappy by lying on the dust ? I
 your welfare Then why are you lying
 ,starred person when I am still alive ? I
 skilful physicians under me and have
 amply Tell me what is now ailing you,
 cure you of that. Darling ! I am ever

Now tell me frankly whom you wish
 o has incurred your displeasure ? Don't
 ody so Myself and my men are always
 i. Now tell me, which innocent man
 t to death or which guilty person will be
 Which poor fellow is to be made rich
 an will be deprived of his riches ? I
 act against your will Tell me your wish
 o fulfil your desire even at the sacrifice
 u know that I am ever devoted to you,
 about the attainment of your object and
 and truth I swear that I shall carry out
 lands to the utmost verge of the earth
 by the sun belong to me. Dravira, Sindhu,
 rashtras, Dakshinapatha, Anga, Banga,
 sha, Kashi, and Koshala are all under my
 lth, crops and animals of these provinces
 t ask for what you want of them Don't

torture your delicate body any further. Rise up and tell me the cause of your tears. Like the sun drying up the dew by its rays, I shall remove all apprehensions from your heart."

CHAPTER VIII

KAIKEYI SPEAKS

Being thus assured by these sweet words of Dasaratha she opened her lips to torment her husband with unexpected pain. She said, "My Lord! None has insulted or abused me. I have resolved something in my mind and you will have to fulfil my desire. If you are really earnest in seeing me happy then for my confidence you must first bind yourself by an oath or I shall not disclose my intentions to you."

The King then with a smile raised Kaikeyi from the ground and placing her on his lap he began, "Ah my proud beauty! don't you know that I have no dearer object than you excepting Ram on earth, and I swear by that beloved and invincible Ram that I shall accomplish what you wish. My mind like my words is eager to carry out your wishes. Now tell me your mind and save me from infinite misery. Never fear that I shall ever refuse to grant your prayer. By my religion I swear I shall do your pleasure. Now speak out your heart without any hesitation whatever.

Kaikeyi thus seeing Dasaratha bound by solemn oath

certain about the fulfilment of her desire, of Bharat's installation she, like cruel death, dreadful words. "You have repeatedly sworn prayer Let it be heard by the thirty-three be witnessed by the sun, the moon, day sky, the ten quarters, the house-hold gods, earth, Gandharvas, the Rakshasas, let all your vow. Let the Gods witness that a has promised to grant my prayer" complementing the King for her own inter- Kaikeyi said —

„ just remember the fight between the Gods Viras and your own duel with Samvara in tainted from your weakness At that time your life by nursing you day and night, for wanted to grant me two boons, but then I did nothing Now the time has arrived for them and if you do not grant my prayer I shall lose life for this insult "

subdued the King completely by her beauty, Sita could not set her at naught. The King himself by a vow for his own destruction, as trapped by a fatal noose Kaikeyi then said, I of installing Ram on the throne install him in his place, and let gentle Ram wearing deerskin matted locks pass his life as a mendicant for years in the Dandaka forest. Let Bharat bend and Ram go to the forest even this day my wish and my prayer Prove yourself true words and keep your prestige and uphold the

honour of your line Truth say the sages is highly
beneficent to the people in the next world."

Dasarath was stunned by the speech

"Is this a day-dream or worst confusion has seized
my mind? Is this due to the influence of an evil planet,
or my mind has been completely unhinged?"

While thus resolving in mind Dasarath fell into a
swoon. When he regained his consciousness Kaikeyi's
words at once rose in his mind. He became distressed
as a deer at the sight of a tigress. He heaved a deep
sigh and sat upon the bare ground. He writhed like a
venomous snake suffocating under the spell of a charm.
He panted in grief and anger and cried "Ah shame!"
And he again fell into a swoon. He regained his senses
after a long time and he broke forth smothered with
grief and anger.

Ah you vile and wicked woman! O thou
destroyer of your own clan! What mischief has been
done to you either by Ram or by me? Ram looks upon
you as his own mother then why are you bent upon his
ruin? In my ignorance I brought you home like a
deadly serpent for my own destruction. Everybody is
fond of Ram for his virtues. For what offence I shall
forsake him? I can renounce Kaushalya Sumitra, royal
splendour nay even my own life but not Ram in any
way. My heart leaps up at his sight, and I lose my
senses in his absence. The (animal) world may live
without the Sun and crops can exist without water but
I shall not live without Ram. So at once give up your

aciously pleased with me. Don't enter-
itention.

ou used to say, 'Ram is my eldest son, he
uous of all' Now I see this was only to
or you could not have been sorry at his
he throne nor could have given me so
perhaps you have been possessed by, an
you are speaking under its influence or
ave been so thoroughly changed "

You have not behaved with me impro-
occasion as yet, nor have done me any
cannot think that your mind can be thus
it any extraneous cause. You told me
at Ram was dear to you like Bharat
you want to send Ram to the forest for
' Ram honours and tends you more than

undreds of men and women in my palace
s ever spoken ill of Ram He has won
e by his good deeds He has subdued all
truth, the Brahmans by his charity, his
, devotion, and his enemies by his valour
asceticism, learning, affection and sym-
und in him How shall I say unpleasant
who always speak sweet words to every-
ks my heart even to think of it Kaikeyi,
old, my end is near, be pleased and have
shall give you what else you want on land
up that evil design. I entreat you in

clasped palms. I throw myself at your feet. Please save Ram and see that I may not incur the sin of renouncing the innocent one.

, King Dasarath was overwhelmed with grief. At times he fell into swoon, and at times he wept bitterly praying as to how to get out of this ocean of sorrow. But measurable Kaikeyi said,

O King! After promising boons if you repent afterwards then how will you maintain your uprightness on earth? When the Rajarathis will ask you about this how will you answer them? Wilt thou then say that I have broken my promise to Kaikeyi to whose services I owe my life? You have said one thing just now and you are retracting it the next moment. This act of yours will disgrace all the sovereigns of this line. King Saivya being bound by *Ulu* (his promise) offered his own flesh to the hawk in order to save a pigeon from it. King Alarka attained excellent merit by giving his own eyes to a blind Brahman. The ocean being bound by a promise does not go beyond its shores. Just remember these noble instances. Don't break your promise. I find you have grown perverse and by giving the kingdom to Ram you want to pass your time in pleasure with Kaushalya. Now whether my prayer be good or bad, or whether you have promised to me truly or falsely do not deviate from it. If you install Ram on the throne I shall drink poison even in your presence. I shall prefer death instead of paying homage to Kaushalya. I swear by my beloved Bharat's name that I shall never be content except with Ram's exile."

oped The King hearing such cruel words angrily started at her but he could utter restless fear he brooded over his thought-d Kaikeyi's evil design, and like a felled again fainted on the ground crying, "O hat moment the King looked like a mad mind has been thoroughly unhinged, a ment passing through a crisis or an exhaust-

ining his consciousness he asked Kaikeyi, has induced you to believe in this evil as re talking like a mad person, don't you feel did not know that your nature was so me why do you ask for such a cruel thing? apprehend mischief from Ram? If you good to the people, to Bharat, and to me om it

woman! How Ram or myself have offend you think that we have conspired to hurt desire, however, is not to be fulfilled I rat as more righteous than Ram, and it n at all probable that Bharat will accept by depriving Ram Alas! When I shall I shall send him to exile his face will grow moon in the eclipse How shall I look at re just now settled everything about the ceremony with friends and counsellors, how law my instructions like a defeated enemy unjustly at your importunities the monarchs different quarters will say that this king

of the Ikshvaku race is surely a child. How could he rule for so many years? When the learned and aged people will ask me Where is Ram? What shall I tell them? Even if I say this truth that I have sent Ram into exile for Kaikeyi's torments people will not believe me.

Alas! What will Kaushalya tell me when she will hear of Ram's exile? How shall I answer her? In service, Kaushalya is like a maid-servant, in pleasant talks, she is like a friend in religious practices she is a true partner in life, in good wishes like a sister and in affection like a mother. Though she is worthy of honour I never show her any respects out of your fear. My attachment for you has proved a source of torment to me as unhealthy food injures a sick person. Sumitra will be greatly alarmed by the news of Ram's exile, and she will no more believe in me.

Now when daughter Janaki will hear these too woeful news of Ram's exile and my death she will renounce her body like a Kinnari on the Himalayas forsaken by her Kinnara. When I shall see Janaki weeping and Ram going to the forest, surely I shall not survive long. You will then be a widow and enjoy the kingdom with Bharat. As the people find tempting wine a veritable poison when it produces intoxication after drinking so I find you now. So long I knew you chaste but from your conduct I find
cozened me with

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rters) by sweet songs. In fact, I have
wife's happiness at the cost of my son

d! how painful! I have been suffering
rds for being promise-bound to you. I
n does for his misdeeds committed in a

Kaikeyi, I am a wretch and so long I
ou as if with a halter round my neck,
gnorance that it was death itself Like a
caught hold of a deadly snake. I am a

I have deprived such a virtuous son of
kingdom People will no doubt abuse me
stful and foolish for sending such a son to
quest of the wife Ram has already grown
ing the Vedas observing Brahmacharya,
ar the hardships of a forest life? He never
emurs from my words, and if I ask him
rest he will at once say, 'Very well, let me
uses to obey my words it will be really good
is he will not do that My crime is unpar-
ave become a fit object of public contempt.
tainly call me to its abode after Ram's
after Ram's exile and my death I know not
able you will put my other men

ward I shall be condemned as a drunkard
ll surely die for want of Ram and myself,
imitra if she loses Lakshman, Satrughna and
ill alone rule in the Ikshwaku line If
ighted at Ram's exile let him not perform
rites after my death For my ill-luck you

came to my house for which I shall have to bear eternal infamy”

“How will he walk through jungles who always rides on horse-back, on elephants, and in chariots? How will he live on pungent fruits and roots of the forest, at whose meal-time cooks (wearing ear rings) vie with one another in preparing food and drink for him? How will he who always wears costly apparel put on a piece of (coarse) red cloth? Ah! Women are highly deceitful and selfish. Fie on them. No, all women are not so. I only call Bharat's mother Kaikeyi as such.

You have been created by God to plague me eternally. Why your teeth did not crumble down before you could utter such dreadful thing against the husband and the son?

“You are the destroyer of your own clan. You are dreadful like a sharp razor. I shall not comply with your cruel request whether you enter into fire water earth or drink poison.

Dasarath began to lament bitterly and fell unconscious, as a weak patient sometimes faints when he stretches his hand to catch hold of a thing.

Dasarath was lying on the ground like king Yayati fallen from the heaven when his virtue became exhausted. He was about to catch hold of his wife's feet for mercy but Kaikeyi was inexorable. After restoring Dasarath's consciousness she said,

“King! You call yourself truthful and even take pride for being firm to your vows. Why do you then

er and thus break your words ?" Dasarath
 "Ah, vile woman ! How can I send my
 to forest ? How shall I witness all his
 hardships ? If I send Ram to the forest at
 shall be condemned as a henpecked hus-
 air reputation will thus forever be sullied"
 arath was thus lamenting bitterly, the
 evening began to fall At last, the night
 t pretty moon-lit night could not console
 er it increased his sufferings more. He
 and said with a sigh, "O stilly night, do
 I beseech thee in clasped palms, please
 your, nay, rather soon be over, for with
 goes to the forest and my life goes after
 hus be saved from the cause of seeing that
 which I have been suffering so immensely"
 iver, pressed again and again for sending
 est. Dasarath again fell into a swoon.
 e night was over and the musicians roused
 a sleep by singing his eulogy but in his
 came unbearable to him and he at once
 stop

CHAPTER IX

EXHORTATIONS

When the King rose from sleep Kaikeyi again ruthlessly commenced,—

"Why do you look so sad by promising me the boon as if you have committed a great sin! It is your duty to keep your reputation and dignity unsullied by performing what you have promised. Virtuous people say truth is the highest virtue, and it is in the interest of righteousness that I am exhorting you to keep up your promise. You know how king Saivya attained great merits by offering his flesh to the hawk, how king Alarka unhesitatingly plucked his own eye for a blind Brahman. Truth is eternal, truth is Brahman. Upon truth all religion is based. Truth is the indestructible Veda. It is through truth that man attains his highest salvation.

"Now if you have any regard for religion then follow truth. Do not deviate from your promise. I say this in the interest of your righteousness. Send Ram into exile. If you neglect it, I shall put an end to my life even in your presence."

Dasarath grew pale at these exhortations of Kaikeyi, and after some great efforts he broke forth again "O wicked woman! Hereby I renounce your hand which I took mine with Mantras before the sacrificial fire. Hereby I also renounce my son Bharat born of your womb. The night is over. Even now the people will

and ask me to expedite about the installation, since you stand in the way, Ram will perform funeral obsequies with the provisions proper for coronation."

He gazed forth at these words and said,

"You are saying now? Send for Ram immediately, fetch him to the forest, and install Bharata, or you shan't be able to go even a step further."

Bharata smarting under great pains said, "I know the truth. My senses are about to leave me. I can do no more. Do what you will. Only let me look of Ram before my consciousness fails."

When the sun arose, and the auspicious hour came, and Vasistha with all the articles of coronation had entered the palace. In his way he found the streets well-broomed and watered, the shops full of goods, flags streaming from every place, and the atmosphere laden with the fragrance of sandal, Dhupa. Signs of great festivity were everywhere met. And Vasistha with a cheerful heart went his way through a joyous and eager crowd to the palace.

At that time Sumantra came out of the inner apartments of the palace, and Vasistha said to him, "Go and inform the King of my arrival. Tell him that the sea and of the Ganges have been brought to the city. Seats made of fig tree, all kinds of fruits, flowers, gems, honey, curds, clarified butter,

fried paddy Kushgrass, flowers eight exceedingly beautiful maids, a formidable elephant chariot yoked with four horses, swords, bow carriage for the conveyance of man white umbrella white chowries, golden vase, a bull of pale yellow-colour with a big hump and bound by a golden chain a mighty lion with four prominent teeth, a royal throne tiger skin sacrificial wood fire, all kinds of musical instruments well-adorned public women Brahmins, Acharyas (teacher) cows and various kinds of sacred animals and birds have been collected. Prominent men of the town and provinces, and merchants with their servants have gathered. Chiefs and rulers from different quarters have been eagerly waiting to witness the coronation of Ram. Ask the king to be ready without delay so that Ram may be installed under the Pushya star.

At this, Sumantra proceeded to the quarters of Dasarath. At the time Sumantra did not know what in the meantime had happened to the king. As usual he appeared before the king and greeted him with words of praise. He said "You are the only object of our delight. As the sea tinged by the crimson rays of the dawn delight the eyes of the people so you delight us all. I awaken you as the Vedas and other sacred learning in your awakened the self-create Lord of all for creation. As the sun and the moon in turn illumine the earth so let me enlighten to-day. Arise O King, to-day is the coronation ceremony of Ram. Put on your wonderful apparel and issue from the palace like the blazing sun from the golden Sumeru hill. Everything has been made ready

ation ceremony and all are anxiously waiting without you we look like an army without its leader, a flock of cattle without its keeper, so please issue the necessary orders."

On these words, Dasarath was again overwhelmed with grief and looking towards Sumantra with a sad face said, "Sumantra, this eulogy of yours is all the more "

words, and seeing the wretched look of the Sumantra stepped aside a little. Finding the King distressed with sorrow, Kaikeyi said,

"O King! The King kept up the whole night in the coronation. He has fallen asleep from exhaustion. So, please bring Ram hither "

"Can I go without the royal leave?" said

Dasarath said to Sumantra,

"Bring in Ram I am anxious to see him."

Sumantra gladly went forth to fetch Ram when he was called,

"Bring the prince soon "

At last the Queen is impatient to see the installation, and the king too is now awake, hence this brought Sumantra as he issued from the palace.

CHAPTER X

RAM'S ARRIVAL

Brahmins versed in the Vedas counsellors, captains royal priest Vasistha were all waiting at the gate.

They brought all articles for the installation ceremony. Not finding the King till then they talked amongst themselves. "Who will inform the King of our arrival? The sun is up and we do not yet see the King."

While they were thus speaking Sumantra met them and said that he was going to fetch Ram speedily before the King, and he again entered the sleeping chamber of the King and standing behind a curtain asked the King to rise up and meet the assembled people at the gate.

But Dasarath said "Bring here Ram. What makes you to disobey my order? I am not asleep."

Hearing this Sumantra hurried from the palace. As he reached the public road he found it decorated with flags and flowers, and a joyous crowd collected there and talking about Ram.

Sumantra saw from distance the beautiful castle of Ram, lofty and white as a peak of the Kailash. Its doors were yet closed though the sun was up. Hundreds of daises were built about the palace and there were several golden statues in front of the palace. Its gates were inlaid with various gems, and ornamented with wreaths of golden flowers and fine workmanship. Metallic images of tigers were kept here and there of

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The dazzling splendour of the palace never attracted public notice and being sprinkled with Sandal it was rich with fragrance like the

ens were awaiting outside the gate with flags for the coronation ceremony. As soon as Sumantra coming with a car, their minds were in joy

then entered Ram's palace in a cheerful way saw various people engaged in performing rites for Ram. Many people by that time were excited and their shouts of joy filled the place with noise. People clad in their best apparels danced and fro greatly elated with joy

Sumantra entered the peaceful chamber of Ram which was guarded cautiously by faithful youngmen and old women clad in red cloth were seated in their hands. They all stood up at his sight. Sumantra then asked the warders of the name of his arrival.

Ram was then ushered in before Ram. Ram was dressed in an excellent apparel and was seated on a seat with a beautiful coverlet on it, like the God of wealth. His body was adorned with sandal paste, and Janaki was seated by his side with a mace in her hand and at that time Ram looked upon her in the company of star Chitra. Ram at the mid-day Sun in his great splendour, with a profound bow said in clasped palms,

"Prince! King Dasarath and Queen Kaikeyi desire to see you, so please come with me.

Ram cheerfully stood up and addressing Janaki, said
My darling father and mother Kaikeyi are certainly talking about my installation. That dark-eyed Queen is greatly devoted to the king and always wishes my welfare. It is, therefore that she is making this hurry. Father will invest me with the crown to-day. Pass your time in pleasant tete-a tete with your maids, I shall soon come back.

Ram said this respectfully to Janaki and Janaki followed him up to the gate.

On reaching the gate Janaki said

"As Brahma conferred the kingdom of heaven on Indra so the King to-day will confer on you the kingdom after the investiture ceremony. I wish to see you put on a deer-skin and carrying the horn of an antelope in your hand after being initiated in the investiture ceremony. May Indra protect you on the east Yama on the south Varuna on the west and Kuvera on the north!"

After the performance of the benedictory rites Ram proceeded with Sumantra. Issuing from his palace, as a lion from its lair Ram saw Lakshman standing at the gate with clasped hands, and his friends collected in the inner apartment. He greeted them with sweet words and then got upon a lofty golden chariot covered with tiger-skin, and drawn by strong horses like young elephants. By its dazzling glare it attracted the people's eyes. Being surrounded by a halo of glory Ram came

ce as the moon emerges from the dark
 nd the chariot moved swiftly with a deep
 e of a cloud. At that time Ram looked
 Indra. Lakshman stood by Ram with a
 hand. A number of elephants and horses
 ar. Music, shouts, and loud huzzas were
 lly heard. Beautiful damsels clad in their
 stood by the windows and began to shower
 head of Ram, while others standing on
 or discussed things concerning Ram. Some
 Kausalya has certainly been extremely
 Ram's coronation. Another said, "Sita is
 a gem of women. She had certainly
 penance in her former birth or she would
 ch a husband, as Rohini got the Moon as
 some other place, throngs of people were
 the coronation

last, reached the highway crowded with
 , elephants, and lined with shops full of
 Flags were streaming from both sides of
 places, pearls and crystals were arranged
 n other artistic forms. Every place was
 th Aguru and Sandal and was tastefully
 th red cloth. And the wide road was
 flowers, fried paddy, curd, clarified butter,
 ch other articles of auspicious rites

Ram were exceedingly glad at his sight and
 our illustrious ancestors ruled with great
 re hope that people will be more happy

under your rule. Nothing is more welcome to us than the news of your installation to the throne.

After leaving temples, chaityas, and junctions of the roads on his left, Ram entered his father's palace. After passing through three rooms guarded by archers and another two rooms he went to meet his father. The crowd outside waited for his return as the ocean for the rising of the moon.

CHAPTER XI

THE INTERVIEW

When Ram appeared King Dasarath was seated on a sofa with Kaikeyi. He looked quite miserable and sad. Ram bowed at the feet of his father and respectfully greeted Kaikeyi.

Dasarath then cast his eyes on Ram and softly muttered, "Ram"

No sooner he uttered "Ram" his eyes became wet with tears. He could no more look at Ram, nor he could speak with him.

Ram was greatly alarmed at this condition of the King. Dasarath was heaving deep sighs of pain and looked like a tempest tossed ocean or like the sun under eclipse. His glory was bedimmed like that of an ascetic speaking falsehood.

Ram seeing this unexpected sorrow of his father grew restless like a sea.

o himself, "Why does he not look cheerful as he was wont in the past?"

Sorrowfully turned to Kaikeyi and said, "O Mother, have I committed any offence through which father is angry with me? You know his anger and ask him to forgive me. He is so affectionate to me, then why does he look sad today? Why does he not talk to me? Is there some physical or mental illness? Is there any other mother? I do not wish to spend a moment by causing anger or dissatisfaction to father's heart. Father is God himself, from whose hands comes his being. Mother! Have you said anything to him in your sullen mood? I am sure in the truth. Please tell me why he has become so sad with unforeseen sorrow?"

Shameless Kaikeyi said, "Oh Ram! The King is angry, nor anything very particular has happened, but he cannot speak out his mind out loud. You are his most beloved son and he is never angry with any unpleasant thing to you. But you must know what he has promised to me. Formerly he promised me two boons but now he repents of his promise to me. I am alone a person because I have now asked for the first boon, which is not unknown to honest people that truth is the basis of all religion. Just see that the King may not be angry with you for you being angry with me. If you do not speak out without questioning what he may say, then I can tell you everything. The King will tell you all, but if you respectfully

observe what I may speak on behalf of the King then I can tell everything.

Hearing this Ram began with a sorrowful heart "Mother don't talk to me like this. At the mere words of the King I can enter into fire and drink poison. He is king father and preceptor I swear that I shall carry out what you ask me to do. Now tell me the desire of the King. Please know that Ram never swerves, from his words.

Then wicked Kaikeyi cruelly returned.

"Formerly in a fight between the Gods and the demons your father received wounds all over the body. It was I who saved his life by nursing him day and night. For this he promised me two boons. I do now ask for them and I have asked for Bharat's installation and your exile into Dandakaranya forest. My boy if you be truthful and have slightest regard for your father's promise then you listen to my words, and fulfil your father's promise. This very day you give up your idea of installation and repair to the forest for fourteen years with matted locks and wearing bark and Bharat will be installed with those very articles procured for your coronation. Let him rule over Ayodhya. This is my desire. This is why the King being overwhelmed with sorrow is unable to look at your face. You, therefore, carry out the King's words and redeem him from his promise."

Magnanimous Ram was not a bit pained at these cruel words. It was Dasarath alone who was being

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the prospect of the separation with his

and calmly replied, "Very good, I shall from now proceed direct to the forest. But I am eager that the King is not talking to me as he used to do in the past. Be not angry, mother, I swear to you that I shall repair to the forest as desired. What can I possibly perform when ordered by my father? I am only sorry that the King has not been told anything about the installation of Bharata. In obedience of the royal command, for your benefit and pleasure, I can cheerfully bestow the kingdom on anything on Bharata. I can even give away the kingdom to the King feeling diffident and shy, please

he has fixed his look on the ground, and is shedding silent tears? Even to-day envoys on swift horses may be sent to Bharata to fetch him from his uncle's house, and I shall repair to the forest for fourteen years in an unwavering

She was delighted at these words and she urged him, "Let messengers be immediately sent

"It is not proper for you to delay any longer. Do not leave for the forest. The King does not wish to see you from shame. Remove his miseries now. Do not depart from his presence he won't have his share."

"What a pity!" With these words he sat on the golden sofa

Raising up the King, Ram hurried about his departure to the forest as a horse spurred by a whip.

Ram then gently said to Kaikeyi:

O Venerable lady! I do not wish to live a selfish life. I love religion like a Rishi and there is no greater religion than to serve one's father and to carry out his orders. I can sacrifice my life for the satisfaction of my father. Now I shall live for fourteen years in the forest just for your wish, even without the orders of the King. Since you have every authority on me and requested the King about this it is apparent that nothing of me is unknown to you I shall even now leave for the forest after taking mother's permission and consoling Sita.

'Now please see to Bharat's installation and to my father's comfort. Serving the father is the highest duty of the son.

At these words Dasarath's sorrow was doubly increased, and being unable to speak he began to cry aloud. Then Ram after bowing at the feet of his father and Kaikeyi, and after going round the two out of respect he came out of the chamber.

Heroic Lakshman having overheard everything was beside himself in rage and followed Ram with tearful eyes. Ram never cast his eyes towards the place full of articles for his installation. He was by nature beautiful, so the loss of the kingdom could not affect the beauty of his face as the waning of the moon does not rob it of its beauty.

There was no change in him for leaving aside the royal

his friends and relations Nobody could
 of sorrow on his countenance As the
 shades his lustre, so his natural cheerfulness
 him Ram entered the inner quarters of
 convey this unpleasant news to his mother.
 Kausalya was engaged in various festive
 about the installation of Ram Ram bore
 calmly but he was troubled by the thought
 that he might die for his separation from them

CHAPTER XII

THE FATAL NEWS

On the news of his exile and the loss of kingdom
 in the inner sections of the palace, and the queens
 and royal dames began to lament bitterly saying
 that he had to serve them even without his father's
 and he looked upon them as his mothers, who
 were angry when abused who had sweet words for
 him and tried to please everybody, alas, that Ram was
 banished to the forest. King Dasaratha were a fool or he
 would have forsaken such a son
 He shed deep sigh at these lamentations of the
 and at last reached his mother's quarters in front
 of which many were seated They blessed Ram as soon
 as he reached there. After passing through different
 halls he came to his mother's chamber, where his
 news was announced to Kausalya by some women

At that time Kausalya was worshipping Vishnu for the welfare of his son. Ram saw there grains sweet meats, clarified butter garlands of white flowers, fried paddy payasa (rice boiled with sugar and milk) sesamum peas, sacrificial fuel filled up pitchers and other articles for offering oblations.

At the sight of Ram Kausalya came near him and Ram bowed to her feet. She hugged Ram to her bosom and smelt his head out of deep affection. Kausalya said "The King is true to his words and he will confer on you the crown to-day. Saying this she offered Ram a seat and asked him to partake something.

Ram then in clasped palms said, "Mother you know not what great calamity is suspending on you, Janaki and Lakshman. I do not require such seat anymore for I am just now bound for the forest. I shall start for the Dandakaranya immediately and there shall live for fourteen years on fruits and roots. Father has ordered my exile and Bharat's installation.

Hearing this Kausalya fainted on the ground like a tree fallen by an axe. She never suffered in like. Ram quickly raised her from the ground and brushed off the dust from her body.

Kausalya then with great difficulty said, Oh Ram if you were not born to-day I would have been a soulless woman but not subject to severe sorrow as this. My only grief would have been my barrenness. I have never received any caress on the hope that all my sorrows would be over by the birth of a son. But alas I shall now have to bear slight and insult of my co-wives and nothing is

no woman than to bear the gibes of co-wives. I am a more wretched creature than myself, but it will happen after your departure to the king that my husband is averse to me even

Kaikeyi will not spare to insult me and ways in fretful temper. Seventeen years after your investiture of sacred thread All have passed in deluding hopes I shall not feel such intense sorrow. All my efforts have

My heart is now over-flooded with sorrow during the rains. I am really wretched for it take me to his dreadful abode My heart made of steel or it would have broken when I heard hearing the painful news. It is apparent, it comes before its due hour. What more charm of life? I shall follow you to the forest as the calf follows its calf All my prayers to the Gods for my son have been fruitless like seeds thrown into the air." Kausalya was thus crying bitterly when he tried to console her with fitting words.

Reverend lady! It is not proper that Ram should renounce the throne and go into exile The King is perverse and old He is uxorious and is coming under the influence of a woman for what offence will he be banished from the kingdom? I have not seen anybody even amongst his enemies who can find his fault. He is faultless, mighty and with-
ered. He has love even for his enemies Who is such a son? The King it seems has become like a child. What son will obey his words

considering the conduct of the previous kings? O worshipful one before the people come to know the news of your exile secure the kingdom with my help. Who can prevent your installation when I shall be by your side with my bow and arrows like unto Death itself. If I see any indication of any disturbance I shall put to death every one of Ayodhya I shall surely kill him to-day who will take up Bharat's side.

Know it for certain that gentleness is the cause of defeat or discomfiture. What shall I say more if father being incited by Kaikeyi stands in the way I shall not hesitate even to kill him. It is proper to chastise even the spiritual guide if he loses his judgment and be vain. By seniority of birth the kingdom belongs to you then for what reason or precedent he can deprive you of the throne? I tell you openly that nobody will succeed in installing Bharat by opposing you and me.

"I love Ram with all my heart, and I swear by my bow and all that is dear to me, that if Ram enters into fire or into the forest I shall be the first to thrust myself there I shall remove your difficulties by my prowess as the sun dispels all darkness. Yourself and worshipful Ram will witness my prowess. I shall even now kill that old father addicted to Kaikeyi and who has grown foolish like a child inspite of age.

Hearing these words of heroic Lakshman Kausalya with tearful eyes addressing Ram said,

"You have heard what Lakshman has just now said. If you approve of it, act accordingly. You should not leave your mother in distress by listening to the unjust

co-wife Kaikeyi. If you are anxious for you will be able to acquire immense virtue by stopping at home. The great sage attained heaven by serving his mother, remain- In point of respect and veneration, I am you as a King himself. I shall never permit the forest. I would prefer to live on mere you. I do not wish for happiness nor want its absence. If you leave me in such distress, I shall give up my life, by observing the vow, that you shall suffer for the sin of inflicting pain on your mother, as the God Ocean was subjected to torments of hell for inflicting pain on his mother." Mother speaking thus Ram gently returned.

"It is beyond my power to disobey my elders. I entreat you by your feet, please to repair to the forest. Formerly, Rishi Bharadwaj gave a cow at the words of his father though he knew it to be a sin. In our line, the sons of Sagar dug to the command of their father. Ram, the son of Dasarath, at the words of his father, decapitated his brother Bharat with the stroke of an axe in the forest. I am only following the examples of these great men. Mother, it is my duty to obey his father. Please do not consider

One does not lose his merit by obeying his

turning to Lakshman magnanimous Ram said, "Do not worry! I know you love me deeply. I am also

aware of your valour and irresistible might. Mother is overwhelmed with grief at the news of my exile. But religion is the highest thing in the world, and that religion is based on truth. The behest of my father appertains to that truth. So when I have got the permission and order of my father and of mother Kaikeyi I cannot desist from proceeding to the forest. I therefore ask you to give up this mean Kshatriya vanity. Please follow my words.

Ram again turned to his mother and said in clasped hands,

O worshipful lady! Allow me to proceed to the forest. I entreat you, not to stand in my way. I shall come back home being absolved from the vow as Yayati returned from the heaven. Yourself myself Janaki Lakshman and mother Sumitra should do you what the King asks us to do. Now grieve no more, desist from the rites of installation and following what is right."

When Ram said all these in an undisturbed heart Kausalya fixed her gaze on Ram and said

"My boy I have reared you up with affection and love, and like the King I am equally adorable to you. How can you leave me then? It is better to renounce everything else but you.

Ram grew indignant at these words and he abiding in righteousness, seeing his mother almost senseless in grief and Lakshman too overwhelmed with sorrow addressed them with words worthy of him

"Lakshman I am fully aware of your valour and of your deep attachment for me. But I ask you again and

put me into great pain by siding along with failing to understand my motive "

the time comes for reaping the fruits of acts prior life, righteousness, wealth and objects of obtained, so the act that secures all these three desirable like a loving and obedient wife with the performance of an act which is not to virtue is not good One should act what righteousness He who grows selfish by neglectfulness becomes an object of public derision. Desire that goes against righteousness cannot be as commendable or right. Our aged father is superior in arms as well as in other thing. Who regard for righteousness will not disobey his though they may be given from anger, joy or this I cannot act against my father's vow. This is our father and he has fullest authority The King is still alive and he is ready to die even by forsaking his son In this circumstance, like any other helpless woman, may I do as she likes Let her, therefore, permit me to go to the forest and bless me, so that I may live after staying the period of vow I cannot give a good name for a kingdom. Life is not everlasting I would not wish to acquire even the world if it means "

saying the foremost of man, Ram, thought of his place by consoling his mother Lakshman brooding over Ram's exile and loss of

the Kingdom was overwhelmed with grief. His eyes expanded in anger and he looked like an infuriated elephant.

Gentle Ram then addressing him said, Now do not cherish any anger or insult in your heart. Do away patiently and cheerfully with all the preparations that have been made for the investiture ceremony but make preparations for my repairing to the forest.

"Act in such a manner that mother Kaikeyi may be assured who was greatly alarmed at the news of my installation. I cannot overlook the sorrow that has been caused in her mind from the apprehension of mischief to her. I don't remember to have ever offended my father or mother. Father is truthful and true to his vows. He has been greatly alarmed by the thought of the next world let all his fears be removed. If I do not so act father will be sorry when he will find that his promise has not been fulfilled, and his sorrows will greatly pain my heart. It is for this that I intend to leave the city immediately renouncing the throne. In my departure Kaikeyi will achieve her object and will safely install Bharat on the throne. She will be able to live happily after my exile to the forest. He who has inspired Kaikeyi with this desire has also kept her firm in her determination. I cannot offend the worshipful lady in any way. I shall immediately proceed to the forest. Fate is responsible for this loss of kingdom and my banishment. It is due to fate that Kaikeyi has been so prejudiced against me, as she could not have been."

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inflicting miseries on me. You know I have no any invidious distinction between the Kaikeyi too never made any difference myself and Bharat. It is, therefore, nothing that has made her cruelly to press for my . Kaikeyi is an accomplished, goodnatured y should she at all use unpleasant words before and unless goaded by fate ? What is beyond sion or unthinkable is Destiny Rulers of ings, even Brahma and other Gods, cannot ate It is this inexorable fate that has brought age in Kaikeyi's mind and my loss of kingdom. es stand against destiny known to us only ts consequences, but otherwise unknown ? s the mysterious rootcause of all happiness, ear, anger, loss, gain, subjection and deliver- is due to destiny that great ascetics sometimes to passion or anger It is only for destiny, ready begun are suddenly interrupted and un- events follow "

shman ! If you can now console yourself with ught for this interruption to the installation you dly have any cause for regret. Cast off your y following my advice and dissuade others to y part in my installation Water brought for nation will do the bathing ceremony necessary ng initiated to the vow of asceticism Nay, I ot look to these things I shall myself draw water well and take my bath for my initiation to forest-

"Don't be *silly* brother because I could not secure the throne. Of kingdom and forest I would prefer the last. Now you see how powerful is destiny. You shouldn't, therefore, any more blame younger mother and father smitten by fate.

CHAPTER XIII

LAKSHMAN'S REPLY

Ram having said this, Lakshman was suddenly placed between grief and joy. He thought for sometime with a downcast look and then knitting his brows in a frown, began to breathe hard like a panting snake. At that time it was hard to look at his face which grew terrible like that of an angry lion. Then after throwing his arms, as an elephant does its trunk with a shrug of his shoulders and looking at askance returned

Arya ! You have been eager to go to the forest for two reasons—to avoid transgression of virtue and to set your example before the people to enable them to stick to their honour. But you are labouring under a delusion. Had it not been so you would not have spoken like this. You can easily overcome your fate, then why do you sing hymns of praise to worthless and wretched Destiny ? The King and Queen Kaikeyi are highly vicious, how can't you then be sure about their viciousness ? Don't you know that many people only feign righteousness ? Look ! How the King and Kaikeyi for selfish motives

saking a son like you ! If their intentions eat you by fraud they would not have set after making preparations for the installa-

ry of the promised boons were true why on out before the preparation made for the It is, however, highly unjust to install the overriding the elder I can't brook this . You will kindly forgive me what I may now I hate that religion that has fascinated and produced this vacillation. You are tion, then why should you obey the words as King? Promising of boons is a mere t your installation But my great sorrow I not admit it to be such This Virtuous you is certainly reprehensible People will ou if you repair to the forest leaving the out any just cause."

§ and Kaikeyi always try to do mischief to except you is willing to carry out their y have put obstacles to your installation, sider it to be fate. I entreat you to give up a Such destiny does not commend to me. ak and powerless follow destiny, but who nd whose valour is praised by the people, ny heed to destiny He who can conquer anliness is never cast down by sufferings or to-day the world will witness the prowess of ess and fate Those who find your installa- d by fate will see that fate defeated by my

manliness. To-day I shall assail fate like an unrestrained infuriated elephant and conquer it by my might. Not to speak of King Dasarath alone, but even the whole world won't be able to prevent your installation. I shall send them to the forest for 14 years who has sanctioned your exile. I shall root out the hope of the King, and Kaikeyi for the installation of Bharat at your cost. Surely destiny will not bring that amount of happiness to him who will stand against me, as the miseries to be inflicted by my unbearable might."

"Oh, Aryya, if you repair to the forest after thousand years, your sons will then occupy the throne. It is desirable to retire into solitude by following the examples of the former kings, by making over the kingdom to his son when he is capable of governing the people as his own children. Don't refuse the throne fearing that you may lose it again for the fickleness of the King. I swear to protect your kingdom or I may not attain the region of the heroes after death. I shall guard your throne as the shore guards the sea. Now get yourself initiated with auspicious rites. If the princes and rulers stand in the way I shall alone be able to subdue them. These arms of mine are not intended only to contribute to the beauty of my person this bow is not meant for an ornament, this sword and shafts are not meant for felling and carrying woods. Don't think it to be so. These four are meant for the destruction of enemies. If Indra, the carrier of thunderbolt, now stands against me, I shall hack him to pieces by this sword flaming like the lightning. Who will be able to resist me when I shall

a field with bow in hand and putting on the
 d skin for the protection of finger ? My shafts
 through the vital parts of men, elephants and
 all display my feats of arms for destroying
 icy of the King and for establishing that of
 hands that are besmeared with sandal paste,
 ts, distribute wealth and maintain friends
 is, will perform deeds worthy of them, by
 all those who wanted to put obstacles to
 ation Now tell me which of your enemy
 red from his life, wealth and friends ? I am
 nt, just order me and I shall try to bring the
 l under your sway "

, these words of Lakshman, Ram the chief
 cendants of Raghu, consoled him again and
 by repeatedly wiping off tears from
 s eyes said,

the best course for me is to obey my father's

Queen Kausalya finding Ram bent upon
 out his father's wishes, said with a voice choked
 s,

How shall he who is born of the king and
 ive on mendicancy ? Certainly, Destiny is
 ful or why should Ram be sent into exile ?"

oy ! As fire in the summer burns all trees and
 this flame of sorrow is consuming my heart ;
 ence will fan that flame ; miseries are its fuels,
 its oblations, and the vapour of cloudy thoughts is

its smoke. I shall follow you wherever you may go as the cow follows its calf."

The foremost of men Ram hearing his afflicted mother speaking thus, said

"Mother! The King has already been duped and put into great miseries by Kaikeyi. I am now going to the forest and if you accompany me the King will surely die

There is nothing more cruel for a woman than to desert her husband. Don't entertain this odious thought. You should serve him so long father lives. This is your duty!"

At this Kausalya of auspicious look greatly said.

"To attend upon and to serve one's husband is no doubt the highest duty of woman."

Virtuous Ram finding his mother approving his words, said Mother! The King is your husband and my father the foremost object of reverence besides he is the master of all and it is mine as well as your duty to carry out his words. And I assure you that I shall come back after fourteen years."

Affectionate Kausalya sorrowfully replied, "I shall not be able to live amongst the co-wives in your absence. If the King has ordered your exile to the forest take me along with you."

Thus saying Kausalya began to cry bitterly. But Ram being unmoved said,

So long a woman lives, her husband is her only master. The King can, therefore treat with us in any

THE RAMAYAN

Sharat is virtuous and of sweet speech ;
try to please you in every possible way.
that the King may not be overwhelmed
at my absence. My absence will be
unpleasant, please see that nothing fatal happens
in your duty to minister to the aged King
who does not serve her husband even
in fasts and other religious rites shall
in the next world, but one attains heaven by
serving husband. Even to her who does not feel
worship or bow to the Gods the best thing
is to serve husband This is the duty of a woman
by the Vedas and the Smritis Dost thou
in expectation of my return pass your time by
good acts After my return you will reap its
fruit and I shall survive."

When consoled by Ram Kausalya said with tears,
I am so resolved, it is beyond my power to

Perhaps it is impossible to avoid the
separation Good betide you All my
love be over when you come back, it is destiny
calling you to forest without caring for me
Go but come back safely Heaven knows
I shall ever witness your return "

Kausalya then began to worship the gods and garlands of flowers, and for the well-
 ne got the Brahmins to offer oblations
 fter the offering of oblations she gave
 Madhuparka and they uttered blessings

lya blessed Ram saying, "May that
 you which in the days of yore crowned
 struction of Vitra" Thus saying Kausalya
 y placing grains on his head, besmeared
 fragrant substance and by uttering mantras
 hands well-tested amulets and a twig of
 ailya Karani'

ced Ram again and said in a faltering
 with tears, 'You may now go where you
 be glad to see you coming back after
 r object in healthy body and my prayers

bowed to his mother and after going round
 ace for Janaki's quarters

CHAPTER XV

JANAKI

Here Janaki did not know anything about Ram's exile. She was rather steeped in joy for Ram's installation. After worshipping the deities in due form she was waiting for Ram when Ram entered with his head hanging down in shame.

Seeing her husband quite anxious and sad she tremblingly rose from her seat and Ram's internal sorrows could no longer remain concealed before Janaki. They were quite evident from his look and gestures.

Finding Ram thus cast down Janaki sorrowfully said, "Why is this change in you? To-day the Pushya is joined with the moon and the planet Vrihaspati is presiding over this union, the day has been declared auspicious for the installation by wise Brahmanas then why do you look so sad? Why your charming countenance has not been placed under the shadow of a white umbrella with hundred spikes? Why the servants do not fan you with chowries white as the swan and the moon? Why the bards and panegyrists do not sing your praise? Why the Brahmanas versed in Vedas do not sprinkle curd and honey on your head? Why the citizens and villagers and chief courtiers do not follow you in their best costumes? Why the best chariot has not been yoked with four swift horses? Why mountain-like dark elephant does not proceed before you? Why do not the servants carry golden seat ahead of you?

THE RAMAYAN

ngs are ready for the installation why your
vn pale and why that sweet smile is no more

n gently returned, "Janakī, worshipful
anished me to the forest. Let me tell you
events that has led to this destiny of mine
l father once promised two boons to queen
Then the King thought of installing me on
Kaikeyī reminded him of his promise and
y exile for fourteen years. The kingdom
s to Bharat. The King was bound by truth
o more swerve from it. I am now going to
I have therefore come to see you once. Take
t praise me in the presence of Bharat, for
are wealthy cannot bear another's praise.
ow the king. It is your duty to please him.
to the forest for my father's vow. Don't be
en I repair to the forest, pass your days by
religious vows and fast. Rise every day
morning, worship the gods properly, and bow
e feet of my father. My mother has been
icted with sorrow and in her last stage you
e her respectfully. All my mothers used to
d feed me equally and you should bow to
day. You should look upon dear Bharat and
as your sons. Bharat is now the lord of our
the kingdom, don't injure him in any way.
propitiated by devotion and service, but
gry if any thing occurs on the contrary. I
sk you to live here following Bharat's wishes

and commands. I am now going to the forest and my request to you that you should not neglect any of my aforesaid words."

Then sweet tongued Janaki replied with an offended air "Why do you think me so mean that you speak thus? It is difficult to restrain laughter at your words. Your words are unworthy of a hero versed in the sacred lore. They are infamous. To speak the truth it is not proper to listen to them.

"My Lord! Father mother son, brother daughter-in-law all of them reap the consequences of their own acts, it is wife alone that shares in the fate of her husband. When you have been ordered to go in exile to the Dandaka forest, my banishment too has, in fact been ordained. Not to speak of other relations, a woman cannot alone save herself husband is her main-stay in this world as well as in the next. A woman should always take shelter at the feet of her husband though she may be deprived of heavenlike lofty position. Father and mother have advised me to follow the husband in prosperity as well as in adversity. If you repair to the forest I shall go in front of you and make path by treading the thorns under my feet. Don't be angry that I could not comply with your request. Take me with you as the travellers take the remnants of their drink along with them. I have committed no such offence to you that you want to leave me here. I do not care for all the wealth of the world but your company. You must not protest against what I wish to do in this matter.

d, I have been eager to serve you like a nun
st, inhabited by tigers and deers, and rendered
by the sweet fragrance of flowers I desire
everyday in lakes and pools strewn with
lotuses and rendered vocal by the notes of
other aquatic birds I shall tend you in the
st full of wild animals and carry out your

I would do in my father's house. I shall
ny fear visit the mountains, lakes and other
ry with you I know you will be able to
ne even in the forest. Not to speak of me,
capable of shouldering the burden of an
number, I shall not therefore leave your
nor you will be able to dissuade me anyhow
ahead of you and when hungry shall feed upon
and fruits, and shall never trouble you for
d I shall feel no sorrow in thus passing a
with you "

l, I am fully resolved, if you leave me now I
an end to my life Please comply with my
take me along with you and you will never
venience for that "

ous Ram thinking of the hardships of a forest-
not willing to take Sita with him and he tried
le her with consoling words

said, "Janaki, you are born in a noble family
ave virtuous instincts in you You wait here
pectation and observe religious practices. I shall
appy I am telling you this considering what
r you You give up your resolve. The forest-

life is full of hardships and miseries. There, the roarings of the lions from the mountain caves being mingled with the sounds of the cataracts will deafen the ears. Fierce animals prowling fearlessly in the forests will attack us at our very sight. There the rivers are muddy and full of crocodiles and sharks, which even the infuriated elephants cannot easily cross. The paths are tangled with thorns and creepers and drinking water is not always available. There, after a day's sojourn you will have to lie down on a bed of scer leaves cast from the trees, and shall have to appease your hunger by picking up fruits that have fallen on the ground from their stalks. In the forest, one has to fast, wear matted locks and barks and everyday has to adore the Gods, the Spirit of the ancestors and receive the guests hospitably. And observing the rules of asceticism one has to bathe thrice daily and offer flowers on the sacred altar by calling them with one's own hand. Strong blasts of wind blow there day and night shaking the long grasses and the branches of thorny trees. There, the nights are pitch dark and various kinds of reptiles roar there freely.

"Sometimes big pythons living in the beds of the rivers with zigzag course like that of a stream obstruct the way. There you will have to bear always the bites of scorpions, insects, flies and mosquitoes. So forest is full of miseries. There you will have to devote yourself to penance and have to be bold even in the presence of objects of fear. I therefore tell you that there is no happiness in forest-life and I dissuade you not to go

THE RAMAYAN

st life won't suit you, and I clearly foresee
e great possibilities of danger to you "

ta broke forth in tears, "My Lord, since
goads me to proceed forward, the evils
by you are of little consequence to me I
one is afraid of you, so the lions, tigers,
and Yaks will run away at your sight. Let
e leave of my superiors and accompany you
ation will be unbearable to me and I shall
mit suicide The miseries that you have
about forest-life have no force. A woman
' without her husband This is what you
ve said at the time of instructing me. Hence
ossible course for me is to accompany you
have heard from the astrologers in paternal
it is destined that I shall live in forest, and
time I have been desirous, of living there
fiction must be fulfilled and time has come
ilment You permit me, and let the words
Brahmanas be true A man who has not
in subduing his senses may suffer if his wife
h him in the forest But you are above all
is and frailties. I have heard that when I
l, a virtuous woman came to my mother and
t my banishment in the forest. Her words
false I have been extremely desirous of
he forest. And before this I had requested
veral occasions to take me to the forest and
agreed to that. This is why the forest-life
agreeable to me Husband, is the highest god

to the wife, so I wish to follow you cheerfully. Not to speak of this world even in the next world your company will be dear to me. I have heard from famous Brahmanas that she who has been given away to another with religious rites as wife, will belong to him even in the next world. For what reasons you are unwilling to take your devoted wife with you? I feel happy in your happiness, sorry in your sorrows and am solely devoted to you. I therefore humbly entreat you to take me in your company. If you do not take this unfortunate self with you I shall surely put an end to my life either by drinking poison or by entering into fire.

Thus Janaki entreated, but Ram did not consent to her words. Sita was then overwhelmed with grief, and tears flooded her bosom.

Then afflicted Sita tauntingly returned with a laugh.

"If father knew that you are man only in form but in nature a woman he would not have certainly conferred me on you. People say that in prowess Ram is more unbearable than the blazing Sun. But this is a false talk.

Why are you so sad? For which fear you are willing to leave your devoted wife? Know me as devoted to you as Savitri to Satyaban, the son of DyumatSen. I have never seen another man's face even in thought, like one bringing shame to her line.

I shall therefore, accompany you. You have married me knowing me to be chaste and I have been long living in your abode. Is it proper for you to hand

another person like one living by the sale

I, whose welfare you always wish, for whom
 an deprived of your kingdom, you live here
 nt to that Bharat But you won't be able to
 e to do so I tell you again and again that
 mpany you and live with you, be it for
 in the forest, or in the heaven I do not
 moment. When I shall go after you I shall
 ustion from walking as if lying on a luxurious
 ll feel the pricks of Kasa, Kusa, Sara, Ishika,
 horny weeds and thistles as soft as linen and
 I shall consider the dust that may cover me
 d by the storm, as the best sandal paste
 all lie down on the green grass of the forest
 more pleasant than the variegated blanket
 r a bedstead Fruits, roots and leaves that
 lather for me, be they scanty or profuse, I
 them sweet as nectar I shall enjoy myself
 uits and flowers of the six seasons I shall
 ous for my parents nor shall ever think of

't trouble you in the least because I shall
 from these things I, therefore, entreat you
 along with you. Please know it that your
 a heaven unto me, and your absence of hell
 eak more, I won't find any evil in forest-life
 ot take me with you I shall never live here
 subjection of Bharat My lord, if you go to the
 will be impossible for me to survive your

separation. Not to speak of fourteen years, I won't be able to bear your separation even for a moment."

Janaka's daughter was extremely pained by Ram's dissuasion as a young she-elephant smartens in pain when pierced by poisonous shafts. After lamenting thus bitterly she deeply embraced her husband and began to cry aloud. Her eyes began to shed long-confined tears as an Arani wood¹ emits fire. Crystal drops of tears began to roll down her cheeks, and the moon-like beautiful face of the large-eyed damsel grew pale like a lotus torn from its stem.

Ram finding Janaki almost fainting in grief, threw his arms round her neck and consoling her said O worshipful lady! I do not crave even heavenly bliss by giving you pain. Of course like the self-create Brahma I have nothing to fear from, nor that I am unable to protect you but as I did not know your mind so I did not agree to take you with me.

Now I find that you are fully resolved to accompany me to the forest so I cannot leave as one possessing self-knowledge cannot forsake generosity. Formerly many royal saints repaired to the forest with their wives and I shall follow their examples. You now follow me as the queen of light Suvarchala follows the sun. When

1 A piece of wood by which fire was produced, by rubbing it against another piece of wood at the time of sacrifice. In the Rig Veda one piece is described as male (Pururava) and the other piece as female (Urvashi). Thus fire was produced by their friction.

bound by truth asks me to repair to the
 no more sit idle. The duty of the son is to
 rents, and I don't wish to live by violating
 ne duty. Destiny is beyond the range of
 it can be adored only by meditations and
 father is living-God and it is not proper to
 for unknown destiny By worshipping the
 in fact worships all and wealth, virtue and
 desire are gained by it There is no more
 / than this Devotion to truth, charity and
 : not equal to this duty
 who obey their parents attain heavenly and
 ent regions Therefore to carry out the behest
 thful father is my duty and religion I was
 inclined to take you to the Dandaka forest,
 ou are resolved I must take you with me.
 , you have decided what is best and it is
 our line Now make arrangements for repair-
 forest Distribute alms to the beggars and
 the Brahmans Give to the Brahmans your
 ornaments, clothes, toys, beautiful beds and
 les that belong to you and me, and distribute
 nder amongst the servants Get yourself
 ly ready There shouldn't be any more delay"
 then being delighted by Ram's permission in
 und began to give away everything in charity

CHAPTER XVI

LAKSHMAN'S ENTREATIES

Lakshman who had been there from before began to weep hearing the conversation between the two and considering that Ram's separation would be quite unbearable to him he caught hold of Ram's feet and entreatingly said

"Arya ! If you are thus resolved to repair into the forest full of wild animals then I shall go ahead of you with bow in my hand and you will roam about with me in charming parts of the forest. Being separated from you I do not wish for heavenly bliss or immortality nor all the wealth of the triple world "

Ram finding Lakshman too eager to follow him dissuaded him again and again with consoling words. But Lakshman was resolute, and said Formerly you asked me to follow you but why do you prevent me now ?

Then gentle Ram told him Lakshman ! You are virtuous, sober and always follow the right path. I love you dearly You are my friend, and obedient to me. If you accompany me to the forest then who will look after Kausalya and Sumitra ? He who could do so is under Kaikeyi's influence. When Kaikeyi will secure the kingdom there will be no end of miseries to the co-wives. And Bharat after his installation will side with

and he will never think about Kausalya and this is why I ask you to remain here some-
 attain them. Great merit is acquired by
 periors, you, therefore, take charge of my
 y behalf. If we all leave her thus she can't
 ny means."

then humbly returned, "O hero, Bharat
 Kausalya and Sumitra from fear of you
 kill him if he slights them from haughtiness
 motive. Moreover, Kausalya who has made
 mber of villages to her servants she can
 usands like us and will have enough to
 elf and my mother. Now, you please give
 follow you. It does not mean any violation
 des, my desires shall be fulfilled. I shall go
 s your guide with stringed bow, a hoe and
 my hands. Everyday I shall procure for
 s and fruits on which the ascetics live. You
 ourself with Vaidehi in the hills and I shall
 ; else whether you be awake or asleep."

greatly pleased with Lakshman's words and
 en take permission of your near and dear
 e Sacrifice of Janaka, high-souled Varuna
 • two sets of formidable bows and weapons,
 enetrable mails, inexhaustible quivers and
 wo swords glittering as the sun. I have kept

ds are intended to dissuade Lakshman and do not
 , real opinion

these in the house of my preceptor Please go and fetch them quickly"

Then heroic Lakshman took leave of his relations and speedily brought forth the arms from the preceptor's house Ram was glad at this and he asked Lakshman to distribute his riches to the Brahmans and other dependants, asked him to fetch swiftly worshipful Sujayna the son of Vanastha as he wanted soon to repair to the forest after greeting him duly

Lakshman then went to Sujayna's house and asked him to come to Ram.

Sujayna then appeared, and Ram stood up with Sita and greeted the Brahman versed in the Veda, and effulgent like a flame of fire After offering him excellent ornaments, bracelets, earrings pearl-necklace stuck with golden threads, and other jewels Ram conveying Vaidehi's wish to Sujayna said My friend ! Go and give this necklace and collar to your wife Janaki my companion in forest life, also presents to your wife a girdle, bracelets, armlets and a bedstead inlaid with various gems.

"Please accept them And I offer to you the great elephant called Satrunjaya which I got from my maternal uncle. Please take it."

Sujayna accepted the presents and blessed them whole-heartedly Ram then asked Lakshman to offer to sages Agastya and Visvamitra gold, silver and thousands of kine with meet adoration, and to give silken cloths maid-servants, conveyances to the preceptor

portion of the Veda who came everyday
 dya.

ful Chitraratha," said Ram, "is our chà-
 counsellor He has grown very old, give
 it jewels, precious cloths and a sufficient
 cattle There are number of Brahmacharis
 protection studying Katha portion of the Veda
 ways engaged in their studies Therefore
 attend to any other work They have
 for good food but they are indolent, give
 camels-load of jewels, thousand bulls, and a
 r of cows for milk, and clarified butter
 Brahmanas come to my mother, give thou-
 uns to every one of them to the satisfaction
 r"

n then like Kuvera, the god of wealth,
 riches to the Brahmanas But the servants
 eep seeing them thus getting ready for the
 n along with Lakshman gave liberally to the
 e needy

time, in that part of the country there lived
 loured old Brahman named Trijata born of
 . He had to earn his bread by digging the
 spades and ploughs His young wife suffered
 on account of her husband's poverty
 at Ram was distributing riches to the poor,
 the Brahman with her young children and
 lay aside your spade and plough and listen
 ay.

Prince will repair to the forest to-day and for that he is distributing riches to the poor. Go and see Ram and you will surely get something."

Then Trijata effulgent as Bhrigu and Angira, covering his body with a piece of torn cloth swiftly proceeded to Ram's palace and appearing before Ram he said

Prince! I am a poor man and I have got a number of children. I have to earn my living by digging the earth. So please cast a look of mercy on me."

Ram then sportively said "I have quite a number of cows and I have not as yet distributed even one thousand of them, just throw your rod as far as you can and you shall get as many cows that can occupy the space covered by your rod."

"At this Trijata quickly tightened the cloth round his waist and firmly grasping the stick in his hand hurled rod which fell on a herd of cattle on the other bank of the Saraju.

Then virtuous Ram sent all the cattle extending up to the other side of the Saraju to Trijata's hermitage, and after embracing Trijata said

"Don't take any offence. I only said this in joke to see to what distance you could throw your rod. Now please tell me if you have anything to ask. Don't feel diffident, I am always willing to serve the Brahmans with my riches.

Then Trijata being exceedingly delighted by getting a number of cows went away to his place by blessing him profusely

Heroic Ram then distributed his wealth amongst the Brahmans, servants, beggars and his friends.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GRIEF

er distributing their wealth, Ram and order to see their father, left the place wo maid-servants carried before them the e decorated with flowers and sandal paste f

ts were overflowing with crowds It was ss through them , therefore, many getting races of their houses, and of seven-storied painful looks on Ram And seeing Ram, and Sita walking on foot they burst forth in ! He who was followed by fourfold forces , accompanied by Sita and Lakshman alone. asted the amenities of life, but for his he could not go against the wishes of his every passer-by to-day beholds Sita who ong be seen even by the birds of the sky at, winter's chill and rains will soon mar be r body now adorned with red sandal paste h seems to have been possessed by an evil ould not have sent Ram to the forest Not 1 son that has won over the love of all forsakes even a worthless son ?

of malice, generosity, learning, goodness, , and the control of the senses are the six adorn Ram

The people will surely be greatly afflicted in his absence, as fishes and other aquatic animals become distressed when the waters of a tank are dried up by the burning rays of the sun. On account of his sufferings all will suffer as the fruits, flowers and leaves of a tree become withered when its roots are severed. Let us, therefore leave our houses, fields and gardens and follow Ram and like Lakshman let us with our wives and friends take the same path treaded by Ram. After this the household deities will no more reside in the land all religious institutions will be destroyed. Cattle, paddy and treasures concealed under earth will be dug out and stolen. Dirt and filth will cover the courtyards and rats will roam about freely no more smoke will rise from the blazing hearth and all earthen wares will be broken. We shall leave our country and let Kaikeyi possess it. Then the forest where Ram will repair will turn into a city and the deserted city into a forest. We shall live in happiness with Ram in the forest. Let now Kaikeyi with her son and friends uninterruptedly rule over the land."

Ram heard the people lamenting thus, but he was not least moved by that, but in cheerful countenance he proceeded onward to meet his father.

Ram then arriving at his father's palace sent information through Sumantra, who found the King dark and overwhelmed with grief as the sun under the eclipse, or fire covered with ashes and intimated him about Ram's arrival. The King then asked Sumantra to bring there all his wives living in that part of the

wanted to meet Ram with all his wives. Umantra summoned all the wives of the there hundred and fifty wives surrounding

Kausalya appeared before the King.

Lakshman and Sita were then ushered in ng.

King, as he saw Ram from distance coming with raised palms, instantly rose from his ed to embrace him, but he fainted on the a, Lakshman and others then ran to his help rose a cry from the women and they began r foreheads and breasts with their palms in thereby a jingling sound of the ornaments d

Lakshman and Sita in tearful eyes placed the sofa When the King regained his consci- n said with clasped palms, intend to proceed to the Dandaka forest. l of us all, please cast a merciful look on me ried again and again to dissuade Lakshman y cogent reasons but they are determined to me, so please permit us to repair to the

King Dasarath replied,

7, -I have lost my senses by conferring boons You therefore, occupy the throne by putt-chains "1

original it is by tying me down which in fact means

Hearing this Ram hastened to reply in joined hands, May you live for thousand years more and rule the earth. I have no hankering for the throne. I shall come back after fourteen years, by fulfilling your pledge.

At that time Kaikeyi to induce the King to agree to Ram's words secretly beckoned to Dasarath. At that signal Dasarath broke forth in tearful eyes.

Go forth, my boy fearlessly for the good in this world as well as in the next. May you have peace and happiness. Come back after the expiry of fourteen years.

You are truthful and righteous. It is not possible to change your mind. But I request you that for the sake of your mother you please stop this night here. I shall keep you all the time before my eyes and shall dine with you. Then after the night is over repair to the forest in the morning. You have undertaken to embrace arduous forest life for my welfare in the next world. But I swear to you that I have not the slightest desire to send you to the forest. But that wily and cruel Kaikeyi who is like smouldering fire hidden in ashes has prevented your installation.

You are suffering on account of her. My boy! You are the best of my sons and there is no wonder that you will endeavour to carry out my words."

Then Ram said Father I shall reap greater blessings to-day than kingdom. Please confer it on Bharat and prove yourself truthful. Please do not doubt me. I do not hanker for the throne either for my own happiness

any dear ones of mine Do not shed any
 nor be much anxious for me. I shall live
 e forest where deer roam in herds and sweet
 shall come back again after fourteen years
 ing for me, it is your duty to console them
 ourself be overwhelmed with grief who will
 ? Do not be sorry for me I do not wish
 ngdom or even dear Janakī by proving your-
 ful to the world May you live in peace,
 to repair to the forest."

deeply embraced Ram and again fainted
 e sorrow Thereupon all the queens except-
 began to weep Sumantra too fainted in
 regained his consciousness soon, and being
 elf in towering rage he grinded his teeth. His
 lark and with red hot eyes and shaking his
 ssing Kaikeyī said, "The ruler of the earth,
 rath, is your husband When you could
 h a husband, you are up to anything You
 ave insulted your husband It is the duty of
 to act according to the wishes of her husband.
 ent upon to alter the time-honoured law of
 to the throne. How pious men will live in
 m ? Strange ! That the earth was not rent
 your conduct Who can foretell the conse-
 your act ? Who clings to a bitter Nimba
 utting down a mango tree. Nimba never
 t however much you may pour water at the
 e tree And it is not untrue that sweet juice
 acted from the Nimba, however much one

may try You are like your mother and I have heard that your mother was addicted to vice. Hear me why I say so

Formerly a sage conferred on your father King Kaikeya, a boon by which he was able to understand the language of beasts and birds. One day Kaikeya was lying on his bed when a gold coloured Jrimbha bird made certain sounds at which your father laughed heartily knowing the intention of the bird. Seeing your father thus laughing without any cause your mother grew angry and said "Tell me why are you laughing? If you do not disclose the cause of your laughter I shall commit suicide." King Kaikeya replied, If I disclose to you the cause of my laughter I shall instantly meet with death. Then your mother said, I don't care whether you live or die you must tell me the reason of your laughter and henceforth you must not laugh at me.

"Then the King went again to the saint who had conferred on him the boon and told him everything. The saint said "You must not disclose the secret to your wife even if she dies. At this your father abandoned her instantly. It is said that a boy inherits the qualities of the father and a girl, that of the mother. I entreat you not to behave like your mother. I entreat you to act according to the wishes of the King and save us all. If Ram goes to the forest you will incur great public odium.

But Kaikeyi remained quite unmoved,

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PARTING SCENE

Dasarath greatly repented for his promise and tears heaving a deep sigh, 'O Sumantra I attach fourfold forces to the forest for serving with them send damsels of clever speech, and merchants with their merchandise, and also those who live under Ram and wrestle with him. The best arms, cars and fowlers well-acquainted with the forest. Let all the citizens go to the forest. They will forget the city by hunting, drinking, and by seeing rivers and streams. Let carts carry into the forest all that is contained in the treasury and in the granaries. The prince will be satisfied by performing sacrifices and paying the soldiers sufficiently. So send all articles of enjoyment to the forest. After this Bharat will reign in Ayodhya."

Kaikeyi's face grew dark and she said, "If all enjoyment be despatched to the forest then Bharat will gain by receiving an empty kingdom—of liquor drunk to the lees?"

Upon this, Dasarath angrily replied, "Why did you say these things at the time of asking for Ram's share of the forest?"

She then flaming in wrath asked the King to send Bharat to the forest as the King Sagara turned out Asamanja city.

At this, an old friend of the king named Sidhyartha said, that Asamanja was a cruel tyrant he used to amuse himself by throwing children in the waters of the Saraju. The people grew angry at this and they saw the king and asked in a body whether the king wanted them or Asamanja? Thereupon the king sent Asamanja with his wife into exile to the forest. Virtuous Sagar deserted Asamanja because he was unruly whereas Ram is absolutely guiltless like the moon.

Hearing this Dasarath said "You see O Vicious woman! The words of Sidhyaratha do not appear very pleasant to you. I shall however go with Ram you remain here and rule with Bharat.

Then Ram entreatingly said Father! What shall I do with troops since I am going to the forest by renouncing all luxury. After giving away the elephant in charity it is useless to grieve for its tether. I shall give every thing to Bharat. Somebody fetch me bark, hoe and a basket for going to the forest."

At this Kaikeyi herself brought a barkgarment and she shamelessly said

Ram I have brought you the bark now put it on."

Then Ram put off his fine clothes and put on bark, the ascetic's garb. Lakshman too in presence of the father put on the ascetic's dress. Then Sita clad in silk became much alarmed at the sight of the bark-garment meant for her as a doe gets frightened at the sight of a noose, and in tears she sorrowfully asked her husband

O Lord! How the ascetics living in the forest put on their dress? Thus being embarrassed Sita stood in

rowing one end of the bark on her neck and other end in her hand. Seeing this Ram and tied the ascetic garb round her. Finding fastening on Sita the ascetic's dress all the it into tears and they said, "Janakī has not d into exile as you have been by the King. do not come back we shall soothe ourselves ita. So you go with Lakshman. Sita can't like a nun. We know you are virtuous and agree to stop here, but we request you to ikī here."

i did not desist. At this, Vasistha, the priest addressing Kaikeyī broke forth in tears, "Ah, woman, your desires overstep your sense of ou have duped the King but you are now e extreme. Sita, however, cannot go to the e will occupy the throne in Ram's place, for better half of a man. So Sita will rule over eing the half of Ram's self. If she accompa- o the forest then we shall all repair to the en the warders of the palace will leave for the arat and Satrugṇa will follow Ram putting uments. Then this deserted city will turn ry forest where even the necessities of life will ailable. That will not be reckoned as a king- Ram is not the King, and the forest where will turn into a prosperous kingdom. Bharat accept the kingdom since the King confers it pulsion, and if he is begotten of Dasarath he ail to act as a son towards you. He will not

swerve an inch even if you are fitted into air or whatever might be your fate. So you have really injured your son by praying for his throne. There is none in this world who is not partial to Ram. You will witness it today. Beasts and birds will follow Ram even the trees that are rooted to the ground have turned towards the direction of Ram. So take off that bark from Sita and put on excellent ornaments on her. The garb of an ascetic is not her proper dress. You have asked only for Ram's exile what harm is there if she lies with him in good apparels. Let her take with her good clothes, cars and servants."

But Janakī did not desist at these words. She was bent upon to put on the ascetic's dress. When the daughter of Janaka having her husband living, put on the ascetic's weeds, like a destitute one, all cried shame on Dasarath. Dasarath was greatly mortified at this and heaved a deep sigh of sorrow then addressing Kaikeyī said "Kaikeyī! Janakī is a tender girl brought up in the lap of happiness, let her not put on the bark garment. This exile of Janakī has been brought by you through your ignorance. But your desires will ruin you as the flowers of a bamboo destroys the bamboo itself. Are you not satisfied by sending Ram to the forest? You will be doomed to hell for your conduct."

Ram then with a bent look addressing Dasarath said —

Father my magnanimous mother Kausalya has not spoken anything ill about you after hearing the news of my exile. She has not as yet suffered any sorrow

greatly pained at my separation I commend charge. She does not like my absence even it, please see that she may not die for me " and his queens seeing Ram dressed like a their senses in sorrow Dasarath could not at Ram and became dumb with sorrow , and time when he regained his power of speech lament bitterly."

h then asked Sumantra to escort Ram in the outskirts of the city, and asked the trea- fetch excellent clothes and ornaments for icient for the period of her exile The trea- tly returned with ornaments and dress Then sita put on those ornments, and thus being e whole room became radiant with her beauty is crimsoned by the glittering morning sun hen after embracing her and kissing her head

aughter ! The women (though she may be t of everyone's affection) who fails to serve and in adversity is reckoned as unchaste The such a false wcmán is that she enjoys happin- ie time of her husband's prosperity, but in accuses the husband of many things, nay more, rts him She is untruthful, and gets irritated ivial things, because her mind is not attached husband Fickle-minded women donot care for neage , they are, not won over by ornaments they are ungrateful, and have little regard for ness and they never acknowledge their faults

even when pointed out. But those who are obedient to their superiors, truthful and pure, regard their husbands as the supreme agents for moral and spiritual well being. Now though Ram has been sent into exile do not neglect him. Whether he be rich or poor you must always revere him as a God.

Janaki then replied in clasped palms, I shall surely obey your words. I know how one ought to behave with her husband. I am inseparable from righteousness as the brightness from the moon. A woman can never be happy even with hundred sons, without the husband her life is then like a lyre without the strings, or a chariot without its wheels. The gifts of the father mother and the son are limited. It is only the husband's gifts that are unlimited nobody can give so much. Who will not serve her husband? Why should I slight my husband? Husband is the highest God to a woman?

Kaushala was mightily pleased at Janaki's words.

Then Ram assured his mother saying that he would come back with Lakshman and Sita after fourteen years. There addressing the women there Ram said in clasped hands, Mothers! If on account of leaving together I have ever even unwittingly illtreated any one of you please forgive me to-day"

At this all the women burst into bitter cries, and the palace which was once resounded with musical notes became reverberant with their lamentations.

Then Ram with Lakshman and Sita in clasped palms bowed at Dasarath's feet and after going round him he bowed to his mother

n first bowed to Kausalya and then to his
itra. Sumitra after kissing his head said,

7, Though you are attached to all yet I ask
air to the forest Your brother is going to

You must, therefore, be vigilant in all
must regard Ram whether in prosperity or
as your true lord It is just that the younger
the elder Now go to the forest look upon
should look upon your father, on Janakī as
r, and on deep forest as Ayodhya "

umantra humbly asked Ram to get upon

irst of all, Sita cheerfully ascended the golden
ing as the sun

am and Lakshman got upon the chariot after
n the car various arms, coats of mail, baskets
ents and cloths given to Sita by their father

e car began to move swiftly with a deep rum-
as soon as Sumantra whipped the horses swift
l

ries rose from every quarter and extreme
zed the city. Men and women, the young and
l began to run after Ram, as thirsty travellers
l by the sun run after water

entreated Sumantra in tearful eyes to drive
ing, "Let us once more see the lotus-face of
e as we shall soon be deprived of it for a long
haps, his mother Kausalya's heart is made of
would have rent to pieces by sending such a
forest Blessed is virtuous Janakī for following

him like a shadow. As the sun's rays never leave the peak of Sumeru, so she is never separated from Ram.

In the meantime, Dasaratha with his wives came out of the room to have a last look of Ram. At that time being cast down with sorrow Dasarath looked like the moon under the eclipse.

All the time Ram urged Sumantra to drive quickly whereas the citizens clamoured to stop the car. Their tears drenched the street! They were almost senseless with grief and tears fell from the eyes of the women as collected rain-drops fall from the agitated lotuses being shaken by the movement of fishes. King Dasarath fainted at the sight, and a great tumult rose from the people.

When Ram cast his eyes behind he found his father and mother following the car on foot, being stricken with grief. As a tied up colt cannot see its mother so Ram bound by truth could not look to his mother. But the sight of their sufferings became unbearable to him. He urged again and again Sumantra to drive more swiftly. But Kausalya ran after the car as the cow after its calf and she began to cry aloud taking the names of Ram, Lakshman and Sita in turn. Dasarath asked to stop the car whereas Ram urged to move on, and Sumantra sat confused. At this Ram said,

"Sumantra if the King takes you to task after your return, tell him that you could not hear him on account of the tumult. But delay will cause me greater pain."

Then Sumantra drove the car at greater speed. Then the citizens and members of the royal family stopped by

going round Ram in their thoughts, but their
 in the direction towards which Ram went
 counsellors persuaded Dasarath to desist.
 with a sorrowful mien and perspiring body
 y looking at Ram

am was gone woeful cries rose from the palace
 is greatly distressed by hearing these cries
 and despair seemed to seize the land Every-
 mitted with sorrow and began to think of

he dust raised by the chariot could be seen
 ood motionless gazing at the same But as
 as out of sight, he fainted on the ground

ausalya raised him from the ground and
 ng with him by holding up his right hand,
 y₁ walked on his left.

Kaikey₁, Dasarath burst forth, "Ah, vile
 don't touch my body, I don't like to see your
 are no wife to me If Bharat be delighted
 the kingdom, then his gifts on my funeral
 ill not reach me in the next world "

s of Ram began to consume the King and he
 gain turned back to behold the track of the
 ing that perhaps by that time Ram had
 e outskirts of the city, in tearful eyes he
 hoof-prints of the horses hurrying Ram away
 st. And at last, with a broken heart he
 e palace as the sun enters a bank of clouds,
 ace of Ram, Sita and Lakshman, the whole
 ed empty like a hollow deep

CHAPTER XIX

PEOPLE'S REGRET

The citizens of Avodhya all loved Ram dearly and they did not cease to follow Ram even when Dasarath desisted. They ran after his car

Ram then eying them with affection said 'Show the love and regard you have for me, in greater measure at my request, to Bharat. That son of Kaikeyi is good-natured and he will surely contribute to your good and happiness. Though young in years he is old in wisdom he has great might yet he is tender-hearted he will be able to remove all your fears. The qualities that should adorn a king are possessed in a greater degree by Bharat than by myself. He will be a worthy ruler of you. It is your duty now to obey him in every respect."

But the people in tearful eyes entreated Ram to be the King. Meanwhile, old Brahmins shaken with age, pursued his car and asked Ram to desist. Ram then with Lakshman and Sita got down from the car and respectfully persuaded them to stop. The Brahmins said, "We shall follow you in a body since you honour us most. We shall protect your head in the Sun with our umbrellas white as autumnal clouds, obtained from the sacrifice of Vajapeya. We shall carry our learning and Vedic lore to the forest and our wives will attend to your domestic duties. We entreat you by knocking our grey heads on dust not to repair to the forest. All creatures love you and are dissuading you from preceeding to the

the tall trees rooted to the earth, thus to follow you, are dissuading you by deep sound produced by the wind. Look, even they have ceased from their quest of food."

Brahmins were thus speaking, Ram saw the Tamasa from distance.

Along the banks of the Tamasa, Sumantra led the horses, and as soon as the horses were harnessed they began to roll in the dust.

Ram sat on the beautiful bank of the Tamasa, and at Janaki he said to Lakshman: "My boy, this night of our exile in the forest. But don't let me tell you. The people of Ayodhya are sorry for us, and they love us deeply. I am extremely sorry for my other children. Surely they have become blind with grief. Bharat will no doubt console them and they will be relieved by thinking of the amiable qualities of Lakshman, you have done good by saving me, or for the protection of Janaki I would have asked for another's help. Let us pass the night on the bank. There is plenty of wild fruits here but I have taken nothing else but water this night."

Ram asked Sumantra to look after the horses, and he gave them sufficient quantity of grass. The night about to set in, Ram with the help of Sumantra prepared a bed, and lay on it with Sita. Seeing Ram asleep, Lakshman repaired to the bank and talked about Ram.

CHAPTER XX

NIGHT IN THE PALACE

King Dasarath came back to his palace stricken with grief and remorse. How Ram accustomed to rest his head pleasantly on a pillow and fanned by beautiful women, will sleep under a tree and lay his head on a piece of wood or stone? How will he bear the hardships of a forest life? Such thoughts pained the King greatly and he asked the sentries in a faltering voice to take him to Kausalya's quarters. When the warders did so Dasarath entered the room hanging down his head in sad dejection. He was oppressed by the gloomy look of the room as the sky appears cheerless without the moon, and he cried, "Ah Ram! How could you leave your parents? Ah, they are happy who will survive to witness your return."

At midnight Dasarath said to Kausalya "I do not see you, please touch my body with your palm. My power of vision has gone with Ram."

Then Kausalya aggrieved for her son, said, "My Lord! Crooked Kaikeyi having vented her venom will now freely roam about like a snake that has cast off her slough. If Ram had stopped at home and lived on alms or if I had made him Kaikeyi's slave, even that would have been better. But sent by you to the forest at Kaikeyi's words what privations he will be subject to! Will such a time ever come when my sorrow will be over by seeing Ram returning with Lakshman and Sita? Certainly

rly committed great sin by cutting off the
 ws thus preventing the calves from drinking
 r's milk and it is for this that I have been
 my son I cannot live without my son "
 rtuous Sumantra consoled her, saying, "O
 ady, your son is a prince among men, why do
 o bitterly ? Your son has gone to the forest
 pledge of his father, and he will reap immense
 the next world Lakshman will minister
 and I tell you that considering Ram's heroism
 qualities there is no doubt that he will return
 rest and regain his Kingdom And Ram will
 d on the throne with the Earth, Vaidehi and
 ss of victory Banish your sorrows, evil can-
 a Ram You will again see your son, like the
 moon bowing at your feet, and you will shed
 y like drops of rain from the clouds "
 s Kausalya's grief was somewhat assuaged

CHAPTER XXI

FRIENDSHIP WITH GUBAK

passed the night on the bank of the Tamasa and
 from sleep with the rise of the dawn He then
 ing Lakshman, said, "My boy ! The people have
 at homes for our sake They are resolved to take
 k Let us, while they are asleep, get into our car
 ickly leave this place "

Lakshman agreed and Ram then asked the charioteer to yoke the horses. Sumantra soon got the chariot ready. Ram got upon it with Sita and Lakshman and in a short time left behind the Tamasa full of eddies and set out towards the north.

When the day dawned the citizens began to cast tearful glances all round but even the dust raised by the wheels of the chariot could not be seen.

"Ah, cursed is sleep!" They broke forth in one voice. It is for sleep that we have missed that broad-chested and mighty-armed hero. How could he leave us since he looked after us as an affectionate father looks after his sons? Here we shall die or proceed towards the north-to-meet death. Sufficient dry woods are available on the banks of the Tamasa we shall prepare a funeral pyre and then cast ourselves into it. What is the good of living without Ram?

Then the citizens for some distance followed the track of the car but as it could no more be traced they returned to the city with tearful eyes. When they came back all were overwhelmed with grief. People gave up rejoicing. Merchants did not open their stalls or spread their stores. In every family all the members were smitten with sorrow and householders even neglected their everyday duties.

All the women cursed Kaikeyi and said, "Blessed are Sita and Lakshman for they have followed Ram. Blessed are the rivers and ponds in which Ram will bathe. The mountains will greet him as a welcome guest. Trees will contribute to his comfort by providing him with

ves. The mountains will present him with
uits and flowers and crystal water for drink.
witness trees with wonderful blossoms and
swarms of bees hovering on them Where is
is no defeat or fear"

y then declined in sorrow, the sun set, as if
ble to see the sorrows of the people. And the
Ayodhya looked like a starless night.

while, Ram in order to fulfil his father's pro-
red a long distance and the day dawned on his
ter saying his morning prayers, Ram entered
ferent province and proceeded along witnessing
fields, flower-gardens and villages on both sides
ad. The car was moving very fast, but Ram
nsible to its motion being absorbed in delight
ght of natural beauties When the villagers
they cursed both Dasarath and Kaikeyi Thus
ached the last limits of Koshala Then after
the sacred stream Vedsaruti Ram proceeded
the south. After some distance he crossed the
flowing into the ocean. He then crossed, over
ndika resounding with the cackling notes of the
nd the ducks Here Ram pointed out to Sita the
which Manu made over to king Ikshwaku
n Addressing Sumantra, Ram said, "When shall
be back and hunt among the flowery woods on
nks of Saraju with my parents? Of course, I
io great love for hunting but since it has been
ned by the host of saintly kings I cannot condemn
mething forbidden."

Ram then turned towards Ayodhya and said with clasped palms "Ah my beloved city—governed by the Raghus, I bow to thee and to all the deities that protect you and live in you. I shall greet you again with my parents, returning from forest after being absolved from the debt of vow

Ram then, raising his hands, addressing the people said, "You have shown sufficient regard and love for me. You must not suffer any more. Now go back and allow me to proceed to my destination

Thereupon the people returned after saluting Ram. They again and again stopped on their way to have a look of Ram. But their eyes were not gratified by seeing Ram again and again

At last Ram vanished out of their sight like the evening sun, and left behind the kingdom of Kosala inhabited by generous people, where the Vedas are continually chanted, which abounds in tanks and mango-groves and rich in wealth cattle and grains, crowded with hamlets each worthy of a monarch's care

Ram then reached prosperous Srngaverapura beautified with gardens. There he found the sacred Ganges flowing with a deep murmuring sound. There the crystal water of the Ganges were cool and transparent like gems and beautiful hermitages stood on its banks. At some places the river was dashing furiously against rocks and stones. Somewhere it was laughing in foams, at some places it was flowing like a braid of hair and somewhere it was full of eddies. At some places, ducks and cranes were making noise on sandy tracts, some-

ees stood in a row like a garland and some, and lotuses were floating on the stream Ram of Bhagirathi said, "Look Sumantra, at a ce from the river there stands an Ingudi l with blossoms and leaves We shall put

in and Sumantra agreed and the car quickly the tree Ram Janaki and Lakshman got the car, Sumantra then unyoked the horses ear Ram for serving him

ived at that place a powerful king of the alled Guhak Hearing that Ram had arrived ada¹ kingdom, Guhak with his aged ministers s came to Ram and after expressing his deep d embracing him said, "Friends, you should ny kingdom as yours like Ayodhya. Now hat shall I do for you. It is only through me that one gets such a welcome guest

this, the Nishada King brought Arghya and ruits and asked, "Friends, had you a pleasant

This Nishada Kingdom is yours and we are vants, Now please accept this food and drink, also fodder for your horses"

earing these words said, "Oh Nishada King, en well-received and extremely glad that you me from a distance to show your affection

t probably a Non-Aryan people whose chief occupation g, and untouchable to the high-caste Hindus

Saying this, Ram deeply embraced Guhak and said: "It is due to my good luck that I find you hale and hearty with your friends and relations. Is everything safe with your kingdom and forest? The things you have presented me out of love I cannot accept. For I shall have to live like an ascetic by wearing bark and living on roots and fruits. So I cannot accept anything but fodder from you for the horses. These horses are dear to king Dasarath and I shall think myself entertained if they are cared for and fed."

Ram then said his evening prayers and after it was over Lakshman brought drinking water for Ram. After drinking water Ram lay down with Janaki on ground. Lakshman then after washing their feet took shelter under a tree.

Finding Lakshman keeping up the night for protection of Ram Guhak sorrowfully said: "Prince, soft bed has been prepared for you just take your rest, we can bear all hardships at ease. I will with bow in hand and with my men guard my friend reposing with Sita. I always roam in the forest and there is nothing unknown to me." At this Lakshman replied, "Oh Nishada King, I know you are virtuous and when you have taken the responsibility of protection there is nothing to fear from. But look the chief of the Raghus line is lying on the ground with Janaki. Then what necessity is there for my sleep. He is our eldest and father got him after long prayers as a divine favour. Surely the king won't survive long after sending Ram to the forest, and soon the earth will be widowed by his death. O Nishada

't think Kausalya, Sumitra and Dasarath
 . If it is so, they won't survive this night
 may live by looking up to Satrugna ,
 a will die for her son. I know not what
 to father in absence of his eldest son
 ie, and Kausalya after her They are
 ho will be able to perform the funeral rites
 , and live in Ayodhya my father's capital
 ith fine terraces, gardens, wide roads, magni-
 es, and inhabited by happy and healthy
 where there is plenty of horses, elephants,
 courtesans Alas! Heaven alone knows
 her is alive or not "

k of dawn Ram said, "Lakshman, the night
 the cuckoos are singing in the wood and the
 cocks are being heard. Let us now cross the
 Then addressing Sumantra Ram said, "Go
 e King soon, my journey by the car must

forth, I shall walk on foot and enter the
 t, just see that father may not be too much
 for me, and after conveying my deep respects,
 him on my behalf that I am not sorry for my
 i the city, or for habitation in the forest
 expiry of fourteen years he will find us with
 in

saying this to my father and mother convey
 to my other mothers and Kaikeyi Give
 our respect and tell her that everything is
 h us Also tell the King to fetch Bharat soon

and install him on the throne. Please also tell dear Bharat that he should behave with our mothers as he will behave towards the king and to look upon Sumitra and Kausalya as he will look upon Kaikeyi. Sumantra then said with tears. "I now find that virtue gentleness, candour are not rewarded in this earth.

Ram then persuaded Sumantra to leave him and go back to the city

Sumantra then burst forth in tears. How shall I go back with the empty car? Permit me to follow you After the expiry of the period of exile, I shall return with you to Ayodhya in this car Living with you I shall not feel the length of time.

Ram then said "I know you love me, but you must go back. On your return mother Kaikeyi will be confirmed about my banishment. But so long you do not go back she will doubt it and suspect the righteous King. My prime motive is that Kaikeyi may enjoy the kingdom of Bharat. You therefore go back for me and for my father

Ram then asked Guhak to fetch him a boat for crossing the Ganges. At this the king of the Nishada said to his men Bring without delay a good and a strong boat furnished with a rudder and steered by a helmsman.

When the boat was brought, Guhak asked, "Get up on the boat and tell me what more shall I do for you?

Ram said "Guhak I have gained my object through your help. Now put my things on the boat. Saying

put on his coat of mail, took his bow and
 an to descend the bank with Lakshman and
 hat time Sumantra approached Ram and said
 hands, "Prince ! Tell me what am I to do

hen touching him by the right hand said, 'You
 dily return to the king You are a friend of
 ku line Father has been greatly mortified
 sence Just console him and tell him that he
 us again in the capital after fourteen years Tell
 we are not least sorry for leaving the city for
 t. Please see that king may not be unhappy ir
 "

antra then shed bitter tears and stood mute with
 rful heart.

chandra then turning to Guhak said, "Guhak ! I
 t seem proper to me to live in a forest inhabited

I should now live in a hermitage and should be
 y dressed for that, I shall repair to the forest like
 tic with Sita and Lakshman , please bring me the
 a Banian tree for producing the matted hair o
 etic."

en the Banian gum was brought The two brother
 matted their locks and put on bark-garment
 upon they looked like two Rishis

the time of departure, Ram addressing Guhak said
 riend ! There are good many difficulties in ad
 tering a kingdom, so you should always be vigilan

your army, exchequer, forts and provinces
 ing the edge of the Ganges, Ram asked Lakshmar

first to help Janakī to get upon the boat and then get into it himself. Thus being done, Ram boarded the boat. Then the boat began to move swiftly being pulled by the oars.

Lakshman and Janakī bowed to the Ganges, and when the boat reached the midstream Janakī with clasped palms said O Ganga I May the prince through your grace safely fulfil the vow. May he return with us after passing fourteen years in the forest. After returning safely I shall worship you to my heart's content. You are the consort of the Ocean and you cover the regions of Brahma O Goddess! I bow to thee. If Ram returns safely and gets back his kingdom I shall distribute for you through Brahmanas thousands of kine horses, jars of wine and pillao¹ I shall worship the gods that dwell in your banks and the holy shrines and the sacred places of pilgrimage that stand on your banks.

The boat soon reached the right bank of the Ganges. Then landing from the boat Ram said to Lakshman. "Be careful for the protection of Sita, be it, in solitude or in society of men. You walk ahead and let Sita follow you. I shall go after you protecting you both. It is necessary to protect each other. To-day Janakī has entered that forest where there is no human habitation and where the ground is uneven and full of pits and

1 An Indian delicacy—rice cooked with clarified butter and various rich spices, along with meat or fish wrongly supposed to have been introduced in the Mahomedan rule.

I will experience the hard-ships of a forest on this day."

When he reached the rich province of Batsa, rich in game, he then killed boars and deer and taking the meat entered the forest in the evening. After saying his evening prayers, Ram spoke to Lakshman: "This is the first night that we are going outside the city. You should not feel uneasy from henceforth, we shall have to be vigilant at all times with us to protect what Sita possesses and give her what she doesn't possess. Come, let us collect grass and leaves and prepare a bed on the ground and somehow lie down on it."

Lakshman lay down on a bed of leaves under a Banian tree. Brother, surely the King is passing a miserable life. Kaikeyi's desire has been fulfilled. From what it seems to me that lust is the most powerful passion in man even stronger than greed for gold. It shows lust forgetting all other interests brings him like King Dasarath. Kaikeyi may now have Salya and Sumitra. Your mother will be distressed for us. So go back to Ayodhya to-morrow. I shall alone go with Sita to the Dandaka forest. My mother Kausalya will suffer much on my account. A woman bring forth an unworthy son like me. What can I have rendered to my mother?

Seeing Ram to be silent Lakshman observed sadly: "Ayodhya looks gloomy like a moonless night. I cannot live without you. I do not care for my life, heaven being separated from you." The forests were full of human beings and there was none with whom they lay down fearlessly as lions on lonely peaks.

CHAPTER XXII

HERMITAGE OF BHARADWAJ

As the sun rose in the east they rose from sleep and proceeded towards the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna and in their way they beheld various landscapes and flowery trees.

When the day declined Ram said to Lakshman Look smoke rising from the direction of Prayaga. Perhaps some ascetic lives near We have certainly arrived near the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna The deep rumbling noise is distinctly heard.

In the evening Ram reached the hermitage of saint Bharadwaj by putting beasts and birds of the asylum into fright and found the great anchorite seated with his disciples. Ram after saluting the sage with Lakshman and Sita said, 'Sir we are the sons of King Dasarath I am Ram and he is Lakshman The auspicious daughter of Janaka—the saintly king—is my wife. In obedience to the mandate of our father we are now repairing to the forest." Hearing this the ascetic welcomed him with Arghya and offered him a bull¹ and various kinds of fruits and roots and drinking water and assigned to him a place of rest.

Then Bharadwaj and other hermits sat round Ram and Bharadwaj said

1 It alludes to the custom when the Hindus were in the habit of taking beef. When a notable guest came the host often offered him a calf or a bull for his entertainment.

We have heard that you have been banishing. However live in this beautiful secluded

applied, "There are cities and human habitations about it. People will then easily see me and they will then often come to us. For this place does not appear to be much commendable. Name me some lonely place where Janaki can happily."

Bharadwaj said, "There is a mountain called the Chitrakuta, twenty miles away from this place. Plenty of flowers, fruits, deer, bears and monkeys live there. The hill is frequented by many old saints from there have attained heaven by devoting themselves to meditations for hundreds of years. It seems to me the Chitrakuta will be pleasant for you. If you like you may live with me in my hermitage."

Ram passed the night with Sita and Lakshman in the Chitrakuta hermitage.

The next morning, Ram asked Bharadwaj's permission to go to the Chitrakuta.

Bharadwaj said, "The Chitrakuta is the best place for you. You will get plenty of fruits, roots and honey. It abounds in trees. There you will always hear

The Sanskrit word Goghna means a traveller or a guest who is tainted by the slaughter of a cow or a bull. Allusion can be found even in so late a production as Bhavabhuti's *Malavika*.

the notes of cuckoos and the cries of peacocks. You will be delighted by seeing with Sita the mountain scenery "

The Ram made arrangements for going to the Chitrakuta and after performing auspicious rites for the welfare of Rama Sage Bharadwaj said

"After reaching the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna proceed along the Jamuna flowing to the west. After going some distance you will find a place of pilgrimage, from that place cross the river in a raft. There stands a very high Banian tree called Shyam with yellowish green leaves. It is surrounded by various trees and many hermits live under it. You bow down to that tree with clasped palms and rest under its shade. You will then come across a blue forest on the banks of the Jamuna. I had been to the Chitrakuta many a time. This is the route to go there. It is a beautiful sandy place and there never occurs any forest fire.

Ram then proceeded according to the directions of Bharadwaj. Ram crossed the swift stream of Jamuna by preparing a raft with dry woods covering with it with grass. Mighty Lakshman made a seat for Sita with cane and branches of the rose-apple. Then Ram made his dear bashful wife glorious like the Goddess of fortune, to get upon the boat, and placed beside her clothes ornaments, hoe and the basket covered with a goat skin. Then Ram and Lakshman got upon the boat.

When the boat arrived at midstream Sita prayed to the sacred stream. By that raft they crossed the rapid

igher of the sun, heaving with waves Then
 ed a forest on the bank of the Jamuna
 i bowed to the great Banian tree known as
 and as Sita saw various kinds of trees
 d hitherto-unforeseen creepers with fruits
 s she questioned Ram out of curiosity, at
 shman brought her promptly divers kinds of
 flowers At that time Sita was mightily
 the sight of the crystal watered Jamuna re-
 ; with the notes of cranes and ducks.
 walking about two miles Ram and Lakshman
 mber of deer, took their meat and passed the
 he even bank of the river.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CHITRAKUTA

the night was over Ram gently roused Laksh-
 sleep
 hman ! Just hear how sweet the birds are
 it is time for our departure."
 bathing in the Jamuna they waded their way
 itrakuta On the way Ram, pointing the woods
 and,
 Sita, how on account of flowers blossoming
 ing, the Kinsuka tree seems to be garlanded and
 o be encircled by a flame (for its red flowers)
 ie Bhallatak and the Bel are bent down with

fruits and flowers and big honey-comb hangs almost on every tree. Dattyaer and Peacocks are crying in shrill notes and the ground is covered with flowers fallen from the trees. There is the Chitrakuta (at a little distance) loud with the notes of wild birds and where elephants roam about in herds. Lakshman ! we shall live happily in the valley of the Chitrakuta "

After walking a short distance they reached the Chitrakuta mountain and Ram said "Lakshman, here we shall get plenty of food, and its water is delightful to the taste. Probably we won't have to toil here to support ourselves. Good many hermits live here. It is a fit place for our abode. Let us then settle here

Then they arrived at the hermitage of Valmiki and introduced themselves to the great saint. Valmiki¹ too welcomed them hospitably. Then Ram asked Lakshman to build a cottage with strong woods. Lakshman there-upon erected a beautiful hut with wooden wall on four sides and a thatched roof. Ram then said "Let us now procure venison to perform a sacrifice for sanctifying the house. Those who want to live for a long time they ought to perform the rite. Therefore quickly kill some deer and bring their meat. It is proper to abide by the rules of the Shastras."

Lakshman brought the venison and Ram said "You go and cook the meat and I shall perform the ceremony "

1 These lines conclusively prove that the original poem of great changes at different hands and in diffe-

n then threw the meat into fire, and when roasted and free from blood, he then informed that he had cooked a black deer. Ram then performed the ceremony and after worshipping the Gods in the cottage. And after that he offered to Rudra, Vishnu and Viswadevas. After this he took his bath in the stream and erected chaitya altar as suited the cottage. Ram then with Lakshman entered the cottage. And Janaki was sitting there. She was immensely glad in seeing Ram. The stream furnished with good bathing places and abounded by wild fowls and deer. She forgot their earlier exile from Ayodhya to the forest.

CHAPTER XXIV

SUMANTRA'S RETURN

Ram crossed the Ganges, Guhak sorrowfully to his place, and learnt from envoys Rama's Bharadwaj at Prayag, and his journey to the forest. Sumantra, then at the words of Guhak, yoked the oxen to his chariot and proceeded towards Ayodhya with a broken heart. On the third day, at dusk, Sumantra reached Ayodhya and found it sad and silent like a deserted city. Seeing Rama coming back the citizens ran after the car, "Where is Ram?" Sumantra then said, "I have come back at the com-

mand of Ram from the bank of the Ganges. I know nothing more about him."

Then the citizens burst into tears thinking that Ram had already crossed the Ganges. Sumantra heard the women bitterly lamenting for Ram standing by the side of the windows. Sumantra then entered the palace covering his face with a piece of cloth. As he passed through seven apartments crowded with prominent people women on the roof of the palace began to cry for Ram and they cast dim look from their large glassy tearful eyes. Royal dames descended from the palace and broke forth with their voices softened in grief.

"Ah! Sumantra went forth with Ram but why has he come alone? We know not how he will console Kausalya. Seeing Kausalya still alive it seems life is full of sorrow and death does not come when prayed for.

Sumantra on entering the eighth room found the king pale and cast down with sorrow seated in a yellow coloured room. Then Sumantra after making proper obeisance to the king reported Ram's speech to the King and Dasaratha fainted from grief.

Kausalya and Sumitra then raised the king and began to weep. Kausalya said to Dasaratha "Why do you not talk to him who has brought message from him? Do you now feel ashamed by sending Ram into forest? In whose fear you do not talk to Sumantra? That Kaikeyi is not here. So speak to him freely.

Kausalya then herself fainted on the ground and loud cries rose from the palace.

after fanning, Dasarath regained his consciousness and Sumantra to come before him. Sumantra, covered with dust, appeared before the King, and questioned him with sigh

"Where is now my righteous Ram ? What makes ? Unaccustomed to privations how he is enduring such hardships ? How he sleeps on the ground ? How he is passing his time in the forest full of animals and poisonous snakes ? How they are associating with delicate Janaki with them ? You know as you have seen them last. What Ram has said that Lakshman has said ? And what Sita has

known everything about Ram I shall sustain my share of these tidings "

Sumantra clasped palms said, "O, great King ! Ram bowing down his head and with joined hands, 'Sumantra ! Convey my words at the feet of your father, and my greetings and news of my welfare to all ladies. Tell mother Kausalya that I shall follow the path of virtue, and she shall properly worship the fire in the fire-worshipping hall and minister to the feet of my father, and also bear himself proper behaviour towards my other mothers. A venerable though junior in age, so she should be treated as the rightful sovereign. Convey my wishes to Bharat and tell him that it is not proper for my old father so let him continue to be the King of Bharat rule on his behalf

He paused and then with tearful eyes said to me,

Sumantra you should look upon my mother as your own mother

"Jashman angrily wanted to know the cause why the King banished his son? And Sita hitherto unacquainted with sorrow began to shed silent tears. I then returned with the empty chariot. At Sringerapura I stayed long with Guha in the expectation that Ram might again send for me. At the time of returning the horses began to shed hot tears and they could not carry the car as before. In thy kingdom even trees full of blossoms and buds look sad for the calamity that has befallen Ram. The rivers and pools had become hot and their waters unclean the lotuses have closed their petals, and the woods and grass have been withered. Fishes and aquatic birds submerged in water all animals are listless, even the beasts of prey do not roam about, and the forest appears to be dumb and stupefied by grief on account of Ram. The flowers both on land and water do no longer possess their former fragrance and freshness and fruits have become tasteless. The bowers are lonely and the birds are mute, and the gardens do not look at all charming. O King! when I entered Ayodhya none greeted me, and the people sighed for Ram. They began to shed tears in grief when they beheld the Royal car returning without Ram. The people of Ayodhya have become dejected and are heaving windy sighs. Every one is cheerless, even the horses and elephants have become spiritless. Ayodhya appears to be as wretched as Kausalya deprived of her son."

Hearing the words of Sumantra, the King Dasarath

him in a voice choked with grief, "I did not with aged people capable of offering advice when I was for Ram's banishment being exhorted by me without consulting my friends and courtiers I did the request of a woman rashly done this thing I told to me that this calamity has befallen us surely the influence of destiny for the purpose of despoiling this line "

Sumantra, if I have done you any good, please take my life I am dying for him, Ah ! Where is now my heart-teethed hero ? My end is near and I am dying. Substitute "

Sugrath then spoke to Kausalya, 'I have fallen into a sea of grief for absence of Ram The sighs are its waves and eddies, movements of arms are fishes in it and its deep murmuring sound, Kaikeyi its sub-fire, and the words of Kuvja are crocodiles and the promised boons are its shores and its width is the exile of Ram, tears like rivers are rushing to it, and the love for Lakshman and Ram "

Sugrath fainted again and Kausalya began to tremble her limbs like one possessed by an evil spirit and Sumantra again and again to take him to Ram, Lakshman and Sita Sumantra then consoling her said, Ram is living in the forest with an undisturbed mind and is enjoying her forest-life with him, and self-satisfied Lakshman is engaged in ministering to their needs The beauty of Sita, like the shine of the moon, has its lustre on account of inclement weather, sun-rising and sunset fatigue. Her feet though not now dyed with

lac but they are naturally of purple hue, as if painted with lac dye, and looked like lotus buds. She still now wear ornaments and with her tinkling anklets imitates the swan in her gait. Don't be overwhelmed with sorrow for them.

Kausalya then with tearful eyes turned to Dasarath and accused him for banishing Ram without any just cause. She asked, 'How the elder brother will enjoy the kingdom once ruled over by the younger? The tiger does not touch food gathered by another. And who is the best of all men cannot have an inclination for things already tasted by another. Clarified butter, Krishna sacrificial cakes, stakes of wood once used in a sacrifice cannot be used in another. So how Ram will accept the kingdom once enjoyed by Bharat like Soma when the best body of the liquor has been drunk? As the fish destroys its own brood so you have ruined Ram. A woman has got three great stays in life, the first is husband, the second is son and the third is her relatives and you are no more mine and have sent Ram into exile.'

Dasaratha was overwhelmed with grief and thought about the cause of his miseries. After a deep and long thought he found out the cause, and he remembered how through ignorance he had committed a sinful act by killing a hermit boy hitting him with a shaft—aiming at him from the direction of the sound. Dasarath then addressing Kausalya said, "Oh Lady you are affectionate even towards your enemies, be pleased with me. Virtuous women regard their husbands as living gods, be they accomplished or not." Kausalya began to shed tears like

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1 the rains and apologised for her harsh words

Lord, I have regard for religion and I know you are
ifful I have used unpleasant words being beside
with sorrow for the absence of my son.
sdom and patience are destroyed by sorrow, so
no-enemy like sorrow This is the fifth night that
s-left for the forest, but it seems, as if, five years
elapsed There is an ocean of sorrow in my

CHAPTER XXV

ANDHA MUNI'S TALE

ght came, Dasarath fell asleep, but his sleep was
broken by the thoughts of Ram, and the recollection
sinful act killing a hermit's son rose in his mind,
ath then spoke to afflicted Kausalya
O Queen! A man reaps the consequences of his
good or bad, according to the nature of his deeds
a child who does not calculate about the 'probable
quences of his act before he actually does it. I
a fool in cutting down the mango tree and watering
e root of a useless Palas, so I have been rightly
pointed Now hear me why such a calamity has
n on my fate"

When in my youthful days, I learnt the art of
ery, I could then hit a thing from the mere direction

of its sound without seeing the thing itself. The people, therefore, called me "the piercer of the sound." During these days, committed a great sin through ignorance, but poison never ceases to act because a child has drunk it through ignorance.

'When I was a prince, and before my marriage with you once I set out for hunting in the lustful rainy season. When the sun retired to the south by drying up the sap of the earth, intense heat declined and humid clouds were seen hanging on the horizon. Peacocks, Charakns and frogs began to creak in joy. The branches of the trees were being shaken by force of the wind and rain and the birds, with the surface of their wings wet with rain, with great difficulty took shelter in them. The mountains overflowed with rivulets and streams, and their waters being mixed up with mineral substances and ashes flowed in snake-like zigzag course. At that time, I felt a great desire for hunting, and thereupon, to kill buffaloes, elephants and other beasts that might come to water for their drink at night, I repaired to the bank of the Saraju in my car

At last, everything was enveloped in darkness and I heard in the waters of the Saraju a gurgling sound like that of filling water into pitcher as is often produced by an elephant when it drinks. I then took up a deadly shaft from my quiver and sent it towards the direction from which the sound proceeded. As soon as the arrow went flying I heard the groans and cries of a man! He was, in truth, a hermit! He was struck in the heart and fell into water. Then the

n said, 'I am a hermit, why have you struck
 arrow?' I came to the lonely river to fetch
 ght. What have I done? I live on wild
 oots and do nothing that may pain anybody
 ghly reprehensible act I am not, however,
 y own death, but I am sorry for the distress
 fall my old parents. I am their only support
 maintain them in my absence? Thus all of
 en struck down by one shaft Who is that
 that has killed us thus?"

, as I heard these piteous words from the
 at night, my bow dropped down from my
 as overwhelmed with dark apprehension
 , and slowly proceeded towards the spot On
 re I found an ascetic struck by the arrow
 blocks were dishevelled, he was besmeared
 l and dust, and the pitcher with water was ly-
 ground"

the hermit saw me standing before him, he
 a denizen of the forest. I came to the Saraju
 water for my parents, why did you strike me?
 t you have killed me as well as my blind
 l mother They are weak and thirsty and
 are anxiously waiting for me Father doesn't
 I am thus lying on the ground Even if
 o know of it what will he do? He is blind
 walk So you yourself go to my father and
 he information But take care that he may
 you Try to appease him, so that he may
 ou in anger Your arrow has struck my heart

as the river strikes against a sandy coast, and it is giving me great pain. Just extract it from there.

"When the hermit boy asked me to extract the arrow I was in a dilemma if the arrow remained there it would give him more pain but if I drew it out he would die immediately

At last the hermit boy began to sink. His eyes were turned up and his limbs became listless. Seeing me thus overwhelmed with grief the ascetic with great difficulty said O King! Remove from your mind the idea that you have killed a Brahman for I am not so. I am born of a Vaishya father and a Sudra mother

"I then extracted that arrow from his heart and he began to roll in agony and he gave up his life by fixing his sacred look on me. I was overwhelmed with great sorrow

"I was struck with deep remorse and greatly repented for my act, and long thought what was the best thing to do. At last, I took up the pitcher filled with water and went to the hermitage. There I found the blind and infirm hermit-couple, like helpless birds with their wings clipped. There was nobody else who could move them from one place to another. At that time they were talking about their son. Though I had destroyed all their hopes still they were waiting for their son's return with water. I was already extremely distressed with sorrow and remorse but on entering the hermitage I felt myself more wretched."

"The old hermit hearing the sound of my foot-steps mistook me for his son and said, Why are you so late,

Bring the water soon, your mother, was greatly
 your delay in the river. You are our only
 aid the eyes of the blind Our lives depend
 But why are you silent? Why don't you
 y words?"

greatly alarmed at this, and concealing my real
 aid with difficulty.

2, I am Dasarath of Kshatriya race. I am not
 I have committed a very hateful act and I am
 sorry and repentant for it Sir, I was waiting
 nks of the Saraju for killing elephants and
 nals that might come for drink at night Then
 gurgling noise. I thought that an elephant
 ing water, and hit an arrow aiming at the
 ut coming on to the edge of the river I found a
 y lying on the ground At his words I took
 rrow from his heart, and he died lamenting for
 rents, as soon as the arrow was drawn out O
 have killed your son without my knowledge
 s been done cannot be undone. Now command
 I am to do "

sage could have reduced me to ashes then and
 t he forbore and said, 'O King, if you did not
 inform me, your head would have crumbled
 m your shoulders Not to speak of a Kshatriya,
 mpious act committed with knowledge could
 gged down Indra from his throne You are still
 cause you have committed the act through in-
 nce or you would have been destroyed with your

family. However take us to the place where my son is lying prostrate."

"Then I took him to the bank of the Saraju and made them touch the body of their son whereupon they fell upon the dead body of their son and began to cry bitterly."

The hermit said, "Why don't you greet us to-day? Why are you lying on the ground? Are you angry with us? Cast your eyes on your mother. Why don't you embrace her and talk to her? Henceforth whose sweet chanting of the Sastras shall I listen to? Who will offer oblations into fire in the evening and bathe us? I am old, infirm and absolutely helpless. Who will now procure me fruits and roots? How shall I maintain your mother? I ask you not to go alone to the abode of death. To-morrow we all three shall go there. We shall soon die in your absence. I shall go to the region of Death and speak to Death himself and ask him to excuse me. Alas! you are innocent and sinless but this sinful Kshatriya has killed you but through my force of truth you will attain the happy region attained by the heroes after death. Dost thou attain the same state as has been attained by emperors, Sagar Sarva, Dilip, Janmejaya, Nahush and Dhundhimar. Your will be the blissful state that is obtained after death by the study of the Vedas, penance, devotion to a single wife,¹ gift or lands and thousands of kine,

1. Strict monogamy was held in great esteem. Siva thus blesses Parvati, "May you obtain a husband solely devoted to you."—

iru, or by the observance of religious rites
But he who has killed you will attain evil
ath' "

ing, the ascetic with his wife performed
tes for their son "

is the pious son of the hermit assuming a
n ascended the heaven with Indra and
old parents saying that he had attained the
n by serving them and asked them to come
out delay "

ter the hermit with his wife performing the
of their son said, 'Oh King, kill me now
killed my only son so I won't feel any pain of
ar my curse As I die from the grief for
my son so you will die from 'grief for your

rmits after cursing me got into the funeral
his wife and ascended heaven thereby."

CHAPTER XXVI

DASARATH'S DEATH

teen, the sin I have committed through igno-
my childhood has now revived in my memory,
healthy food produces disease so this evil act
ice its due consequence "

th paused and again burst forth in tears, "Oh
rely I shall die of this intense grief for my son

I can no more see anything, please touch my body. It is not possible to meet any one after death. I could survive if Ram touched me now. I have behaved improperly towards Ram and I justly suffer for it. Oh queen! I can not see you anymore my memory is failing and I am finding the angels of death hovering about me and urging me towards the dreadful abode of death. Alas! I shall no more see Ram. As the sun dries up drops of water so absence of Ram is scorching my soul. I consider them to be (as lucky as) gods who will witness Ram's face after fourteen years of exile, with eyes expanded as the lotus-petal, well-drawn brows, beautiful teeth and graceful nose and countenance as beautiful as the autumnal moon. I feel I am rapidly sinking and my senses can no more feel sound taste or touch. For want of consciousness my senses are becoming benumbed as the light of lamp grows dim for want of oil. As the impetuous current of a river destroys its bank so this internal grief will bring about my end. Oh Ram my darling! Where are you now? Oh Kausalya! I do not see you any more. Ah, Sumitra! Oh cruel Kaikeyi!" Thus lamenting the king breathed his last at midnight in the presence of Kausalya and Sumitra.

When the night was over eulogists, bards, genealogist and singers came to the palace and began to sing the praise of the King and the palm players began to strike their palms by reciting the deeds of the previous King. At the sound of their claps the birds, perched on the trees, were roused from sleep and began to chirp. The Vinas began to be played and pure characterised

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in service came there, and persons ac-
the rites of bath brought water in golden
med with Harisandal scent. For auspici-
e women and virgins brought Ganges water,
arel, and ornaments and cows for being
l waited with those articles for the King till

But they grew apprehensive as they were
by delay

e queens that were near about Dasarath
e the King by gentle words, but they found
of his heart or pulse They were greatly
out the King's life and began to tremble like
f grass They then concluded, perhaps last
ehension of the King came to be true

rostrate with grief for their sons Kausalya
ra were still asleep Ram's mother was lying
g by contracting her body She looked pale
like a star hid in darkness Sumitra's face was
th tears

g them asleep other women began to cry, and
s and Sumitra's sleep was broken They rose
bed but when they touched the body of
they shrieked and fell on the ground

lya rolled on the ground and being covered with
looked like a star dropped from the sky

eyi and others lost their senses by incessantly
or their husband

were frightened by the cries that rose from the
Dasarath in his death looked like an extinguish-
and as a dried up ocean

Kausalya then took Dasarath's head on her lap and addressing Kaikeyi said in tearful eyes, Now you attain your object of desire and enjoy the kingdom by getting rid of all your thorns. You have destroyed the clan of Raghu, and Kuvja is at the root of it. You know not through your greed you have taken poison administered by another

The counsellors seeing Kausalya crying thus by embracing the dead body of the King they removed the body from that place according to the direction of Vasistha and other Brahmins and preserved the body carefully by immersing it in oil for there was no son to perform the funeral obsequies of the King.

The counsellors placed the corpse in a vat full of oil and they burst forth in tears saying Oh King we have already lost sweet speeched and truthful Ram why have you then left us so? We have been all stranded by your death."

The city looked gloomy in absence of the King. Men and women cursed Kaikeyi and shed tears for the King. Thus the day declined in sorrow

CHAPTER XXVII

VASISTHA'S ADVICE

When the long night of sorrow was over, the great
Markandeya, Vamadev, Kasyapa, Gautama, Jabali
Brahmins came to the Royal court and discuss-
ed matters concerning the administration with
the King.

Being unable to decide anything themselves,
they referred to Vasistha.

“Dasarath is dead. Ram has repaired to the
forest with Lakshman and Sita. Bharat and Shatrughna
remain in their maternal uncle's house at Rajagriha.
It is incumbent to install one of Ikshaku's line on the
throne, for if the kingdom will precipitate into ruin in the
absence of a King. Where there is no King, the clouds
do not rain, seeds are not sown, the son does not
honor his father, nor wife the husband, and it is always
difficult to protect their wealth and women. Great
troubles ensue to the people. In a kingless country
people are inclined to build a house, or to construct
temples, or to gather in assemblies. In a kingless
country Brahmins cease to perform their sacrifices, and all
ends there. Actors, dancers desist from show-
ing their skill and social progress ceases there. In a
kingless country business men are disappointed in their
pursuit of wealth, and persons versed in ancient
learning are up reciting those things for want of an audi-

ence. In a kingless city young maidens decked in gold do not go to the garden in the evening for their sport. In a kingless country cowherds and cultivators do not sleep at night by keeping their doors open nor pleasure seeking people go out in their swift cars in company of bright women. In a kingless country merchants are afraid to move with their merchandise to distant places and no one can hear the clappings of persons engaged in archery. In a kingless city big tuskers of sixty years old do not ply along the streets with tinkling balls round their necks. In a kingless country one cannot protect what he has nor can procure what he does not possess. In a kingless country the learned do not discuss the Sastras, and pious people have little heart for offering Dakshina garlands or sweets for the worship of deities. In a kingless city princes besmeared with sandal and aguru do not appear like vernal trees."

"A kingdom without a king is in fact a river without water, a forest without grass, a cow without a cowherd. In this state it is difficult to preserve one's life and men destroy each other as the fish do among themselves. The atheists who are punished for slighting religion raise their heads in this state of anarchy. The king is the eye of the people, as the eye protects the body from injury and contributes to its welfare so the king protects the people. He is the protector of truth and religion and upholder of social dignity. If there were no king—a judge of right and wrong there would be no distinction between things as when enveloped in utter darkness. In a kingless country disputants can not decide their

As smoke reveals fire, and pinion a chariot, Dasarath represented the kingdom through him. is dead. We therefore ask for your advice "

Vasistha hearing these words said, "Bharat upon the King has conferred the kingdom, is now at his maternal uncle's place with Satrughna and envoys on swift horses to him "

Vasistha then addressing the envoys named, Siddharajaya, and Asakenandan said, "Remove your go to King Kekaya with silken apparels and mats and tell Bharat on my behalf to come immediately giving him to understand that delay may be that business but take care don't speak about exile and Dasarath's death "

On the envoys being furnished with the necessities Kekaya, as directed by Vasistha After crossing the Ganges they proceeded by the west of Apartala and towards the north of Pralamva

On crossing the Ganges at Hastinapura and going at Panchala they went westward through the forest and on their way they saw vast expanses of ground strewn with full blown lotuses, and met translucent streams After crossing the Saradanda they bowed at the atyopayachana tree on its bank and then entered the forest of Kulinga

After passing through Teyobhibhavana they arrived at the forest of Kalinga They then crossed the Ikshumati. They went through Vahlhika towards the Sadaman hill, they saw the foot-prints of Vishnu, and then passed through Vipasha and the Shamali streams They met on

their way elephants, lions, igers, deer and various oth r animals and after proceeding some distance they reached the city of Giriraja.¹

CHAPTER XXVIII

BHARAT

The very night the envoys entered the city Bharat had a bad dream towards the dawn and he became anxious for it His friends tried to remove his anxiety by their conversations

Some one played on Vina, some caused the dancing girls to dance before Bharat, some read mirth provoking comedies, but Bharat could not join them in their jollity

At last a bosom friend of his asked, "My friend ! Why do you look so indifferent inspite of the attempts of your friends to cheer you up ?

Bharat said, "Hear me, why I feel anxious to-day Towards the end of the night I saw my father in a dream. He looked pale, and I saw him falling head long from a mountain peak into a filthy pit² and I saw him floating on that dirty stream and drinking oil from the hollow of his joined palms with a laugh ! I then saw him diving into oil with an oily body after partaking with a bent down head, rice mixed with oil again and

1 Modern Rajgirh near Patna

2 In the original—s lake full of cow-dung.

I also beheld as if the ocean had grown dry, the
 s fallen on the ground, as if the earth had been
 d in darkness, burning fire had abruptly been
 hed, the earth riven, trees and mountains
 d with smoke, and the tusks of the elephant on
 e King ives had fallen into pieces! And I saw
 r clad in sable clothes seated on a dark iron
 l dark, tawny women were beating him! He
 ving fast, wearing a red garland, towards the
 a car yoked with asses! Women clad in red
 ughing at him, and grim-visaged Rakshasis were
 g him by force! I had such awful dream towards
 e of night Now, it is certain that one of us
 he King, Ram, Lakshman, Satrughna or myself
 e The smoke of the funeral pyre of the
 is soon seen to rise, who is seen in a dream
 in a car yoked with asses I have grown
 for this, this is why I am not greeting you with
 ch My throat has become perched Though
 ent I do not find any cause of fear yet I am
 ending danger at every step I have got a
 voice, and feel my life as vapid! And my
 , not at ease at this quite unexpected dream, and
 rehensions about the King can not be allayed”
 en Bharat was narrating his dream to his friends,
 gued envoys entered the well-protected, beauti-
 of Rajgriha and appeared before King Kekaya
 lhajit, and after receiving their hospitality they
 o Bharat After greeting him duly they said, “O
 ! Vasistha and the ministers enquire about your

welfare and they have asked you to set out immediately as there is a very urgent matter which may be defeated by delay and you will have to attend to that. We have brought costly apparels and ornaments present them to your maternal grandfather and maternal uncle.

Bharat after accepting the articles asked, "How is the King doing? Are worshipful Ram and Lakshman safe? Is everything all right with virtuous Kausalya and Sumitra? How is my mother Kaikeyi proud of her attainments?"

The envoys humbly replied, "They are all doing well. Now Kamala the goddess of fortune, craves your presence, please ask to get your chariot immediately ready."

Bharat then went to inform his maternal grandfather and said, "Envoys have come for me. I shall now go to my father and shall come back again when you send for me."

Then King Kekaya kissing Bharat's head replied, "Kaikeyi has obtained the happiness of getting a worthy son in you. I give you leave to go. Communicate to your parents, Vasistha, Ram, Lakshman and others that we are doing well."

After this King Kekaya presented to Bharat excellent elephants, variegated blankets, deerskins, domesticated dogs big and strong like tigers and endowed with formidable teeth. He also gave him two thousand beads of gold, and sixteen hundred horses, swift asses, and also a number of servants for Bharat's retinue.

But Bharat grew highly anxious on account of his evil dream and for the hurry of the envoys. With

a, Bharat then set out from his quarters after his maternal grandfather, Judhajit and other

a journey of seven nights Bharat arrived in Ayodhya And at the sight of Ayodhya, Bharat his charioteer

, there the famous city of Ayodhya ! But from t appears to be cheerless to day ! It is a crow- but how is it that it looks like a deserted one ! ' soil of Ayodhya seems to be dark ! Formerly, , a great din in the city, but everything, seems ashed in silence to-day ! Formerly, pleasure- people used to enter these gardens in the evening , them in the morning, but they seem to be in g for their absence ! O charioteer ! The city o me like a forest to-day ! I do not see impor- ons going through the streets on their elephants

Bowers and other abodes of pleasure where d lovers meet, seem to be solitary and silent ! re falling off from every roadside tree, and the es of birds are no more to be heard, bracing no more to blow laden with the perfume of aguru and incense ! Why musical instruments sed to be played ? I find ominous signs all My heart acheth at the sight."

g these, with an anxious and depressed heart entered the city through the Vajrayanta gate , sight the sentries stood up and after saluting wed him out of respect Bharat asked them to , their posts, and he said to his charioteer

Why the envoys betrayed such indecent haste ? I have dark misgiving in my mind. My anxiety is growing more intense. I see around me all inauspicious signs. Temples are not decorated with wreaths and flowers. The courts are unclean. Merchants have closed their shops, all business seem to have stopped ! I find the people no more gay as before, but sad and anxious."

With these words Bharat entered the palace and he was greatly shocked by the cheerless look of the great city

With a depressed heart and downcast look Bharat entered his father's quarters but missing him there he went to his mother

CHAPTER XXIX

DHARAT AND KAIKEYI

Kaikeyi seeing her son returned home, rose from her golden seat in delight Bharat too bowed to her on entering the room

Kaikeyi then embraced him and after kissing his head asked him fondly "Tell me, my boy ! When you left your maternal uncle's place ? Don't you feel fatigued by the journey ? How are your maternal grandfather and uncle doing ? Were you not happy in your stay there ?"

Lotus-eyed Bharat replied, "Mother ! Seven nights hence I left the city of my maternal grandfather. Your father and brother are doing well. My men have been

own with fatigue in carrying the presents of King to me. I have, therefore, come ahead of you. However, I now ask you one thing. Why the sons of my father have brought me so hurriedly. Your golden bedstead appears to be vacant. I often live in your quarters but why I do not go to-day. I want to bow down at his feet, tell him he is now. Is he now in mother Kausalya's lap? I do not find any one of the Ikshaku family spirits. What is the cause of this?"

Upon, Kaikeyi being exceedingly delighted at the aspect of Bharat's kingdom said, "My boy, thou art the refuge of sacrifices, the refuge of the good, the King of the inevitable end of all creatures." "Alas!" Bharat exclaimed in sorrow and fainted round with outstretched arms.

Kaikeyi finding her son prostrate on the ground like a cut down tree, raised him up and affectionately said, "My boy! Why are you lying on the ground? Just arise. A cultured man like you is never overcome with grief. Your intelligence never leaves you, rightness never leaves the solar disc."

Bharat wept long, rolling on the dust. Then addressing her mother, Bharat said,

"Mother! I went to maternal uncle's house with the thought that father would install Ram on the throne but I see everything has been altered. My father has died of what disease in my childhood? Alas! Where is he who used to brush off from my childish limbs? Happy are they who

performed the last rites of my father. However now inform Ram immediately of my arrival he is my brother, a friend, and father to me. I am his devoted servant. I shall bow down at Ram's feet, he is my refuge. Now tell me what were the last words of the King. I am most eager to hear them."

Kaikeyi said, "Your father breathed his last, saying, Alas, Ram! Alas, Lakshman! Alas Sita!" And smarting under the grip of death the King said, "They are happy who will witness Ram returned to Ayodhya with Lakshman and Janaki."

Bharat asked, "Mother! Where is virtuous Ram now putting up with Sita and Lakshman?"

Then Kaikeyi, thinking that Bharat would be glad at the news of Ram's exile, said "My child the prince clad in bark has repaired to the Dandaka forest with Lakshman and Sita

Bharat was fully acquainted with the customs of his family and at these words he grew apprehensive about the conduct of Ram and anxiously asked

"Has Ram robbed a Brahman or his property? Has he injured any innocent man whether rich or poor? Did he take any fancy on another's wife? Now tell me, why he has been banished to the Dandaka forest."

Then his proud volatile mother cheerfully observed, "Ram has not robbed a Brahman, nor he has injured any innocent person. He has not even eyed anybody's wife, but my boy! hearing of his installation I prayed to the King for Ram's exile and your installation on the throne. The king had promised me two boons previously so

servance of truth he has conferred the kingdom upon you. Ram is now in exile with Sumitra's son. The King died being separated from his son and now ascend the throne. I have done all that I can for you. This city and the kingdom now belong to you. Shake off your sorrows. Perform the funeral rites with the help of Brahmins versed in rituals and ascend the throne."

CHAPTER XXX

BHARAT'S REPLY

When he heard these shocking things Bharat with deep grief said, "Alas! At one and the same time I have lost my father and father-like brother. What shall I do with the kingdom? You have banished my brother and thus caused immeasurable grief, adding insult to the injury. You are a destroyer of the family. You have strewn the path of happiness of the family with thorns. Virtuous Ram used to love and respect you as his own mother. Even far-sighted Kausalya looked upon you as her sister, and she sent her son into exile. What benefit you have thereby gained? You are too greedy. Perhaps you do not know how I looked upon Ram. How shall I rule the kingdom without Ram and Lakshman? I could not have hesitated to abandon you if Ram did not look upon you as his mother. How could you have such a wicked intention, foreign to our family tradi-

tions? In our family it is the eldest son that ascends the throne while others remain under him. It now appears that you are not conversant even with the laws of sovereignty. How could you being born of a king have forgotten this? Your intentions, however will never be fulfilled. I shall immediately bring back Ram and shall live as his slave."

Bharat began to growl like a lion in grief and anger.

Bharat again resumed in wrath, "You cruel woman! Leave the kingdom at once. You are impious and you have no right to weep for your husband. What great offence Ram and Dasarath had committed to you that you have sent one to exile and another to death's door? You have committed such a great sin by banishing Ram to the forest that I am afraid I shall incur public odium for being your son. You have put me into eternal disgrace. You are my enemy in the form of my mother. Don't utter my name by those lips. It is for you that I have become fatherless and an object of public derision.

"To what pit of hell thou art condemned for depriving virtuous Kausalya of her son? Don't you know that eldest Ram is dear unto all? A son born of the limbs of his mother comes from her heart therefore he is dearer to her mother than all other relations."

Just listen to a story. Once upon a time the celestial cow Surabhi while going through the heavenly region beheld two of her sons where yoked to the plough. Seeing them fatigued on account of ploughing the field

on, she became extremely sorry and began to
 s At that time Indra was passing below her
 s of her tears fell upon Indra's body. Indra
 ed up and found Surabhi weeping. Indra grew
 xious at this and enquired whether the Gods
 and as to why she was weeping. Surabhi
 hat there was nothing to fear about the Gods
 ting her sons he said, "Look here, how my two
 labouring hard in that undulating field. I have
 eatly distressed by their sufferings. There is
 er things than one's issue."

At that time Indra realised son to be the dearest
 life and entertained great regard for Surabhi.
 nsider if Surabhi in spite of innumerable sons
 e so sorry as that what would be the condition
 alya having one son only? You will have to
 or the sin of robbing her of her only son. Now
 performing the obsequies of my father I shall
 ack Ram from the forest and I shall myself em-
 he forest life. I shall consider myself fortunate
 r stain will be removed if I succeed in bringing
 am to Ayodhya."

At that time then began to breathe heavily with anger and
 , and he threw away all ornaments from his
 And he fell down like banner of Sakra after
 tivity was over¹.

Sometimes great festivities were held in honour of Indra.
 When the festivities were over the flag-staff that was
 in honour of Indra was pulled down

CHAPTER XXXI

BHARAT AND KAUSALYA

On regaining senses after a long time Bharat said to the ministers casting a tearful look on his mother I did not hanker for the kingdom nor I deputed my mother for it. I was living far away with Satrughna so I could not even know that the king made arrangements for the installation of Ram nor I was aware that Ram has thus been sent into exile with Lakshman and Janaki."

When Bharat was taking his mother to task Kausalya hearing the voice of Bharat told Sumitra Bharat the son of crooked Kaikeyi has come." Bharat is far sighted and I wish to see him once. Saying this Kausalya in trembling gait repaired to Bharat. At that time Bharat being desirous of seeing Kausalya, was proceeding with Satrughna to her quarters. Kausalya met him on the way and embraced him in tearful eyes and then addressing Bharat said You hankered after kingdom now enjoy it without any thorn Your mother has obtained the kingdom by extremely cruel means. I know not what she has gained by sending away Ram to the forest. Now let her send me there where Ram with navel of golden hue resides. Or I shall myself go there with Sumitra or you take me there where Ram is engaged in religious meditations. This vast kingdom now belongs to you."

When Kausalya used these hard words Bharat felt

like one whose sores are pricked with a needle
 pointed at Kausalya's feet

regaining consciousness Bharat said with folded
 Oh worshipful lady, I don't know anything

I am quit innocent of this. Then why do
 you accuse me for this? Don't you know that I have
 had unflinching devotion and affection for Ram?
 I shall say more, the person according to whose
 wish Ram has gone to the forest through his
 intelligence be refined by the Sastras, he will be
 free from vice and sin. May he answer the calls of
 duty, facing the sun or kick a sleeping cow. May he
 not commit sin which is incurred by a master who does
 not pay his servant after the work is done, or the sin
 committed in the attempt of injuring the king,
 or oppresses his subject like his son, or the sin that
 a king who does not govern well by taking a
 part of the income of his subjects, or the sin that
 a man who denies Dakshina after the sacrifice
 does not live long till Ram's restoration to the
 throne who has sent long-armed, broad-shouldered Ram,
 as the sun and the moon to the forest. May he
 not be disapproved of Ram's exile may feed on Payasha,
 a snake and goat's flesh which have not been offered
 in sacrifice. Oh noble lady, who has approved of Ram's
 exile may he live in luxury but without any issue and
 without getting a desirable wife. May he incur the
 curse that befalls a person who kills a King, a woman, a
 Brahmin, an old man, or the demerit of a person who for-
 gets his trusted servant. Who has sent Ram to forest let

him maintain his family by selling lac, iron honey meat and poison. May he beg for his bread like a nomadic, clad in rags and holding a skull in his hands. May he be addicted to wine, woman and dice, may he be overwhelmed with passion and anger. May he be robbed of all his wealth by robbers, may he incur the demerit as he who sleeps both in the morning and in the evening, and may he reap the sin that is reaped by an incendiary or who commits adultery with his preceptor's wife, or who wrongs his friends. Let him be addicted to all sorts of evils and let him suffer from infirmity and poverty being saddled with a big family. He will disregard his own chaste wife close by him after ablutions at the end of her monthly course, and will incur the demerit like him who kills a cow having a young calf. He will reap the sin like one who fouls drinking water administers poison, refuses drink to a thirsty person having water in his possession or who quarrels about their respective faiths and gods as well as he who listens to those disputes."

Kausalya then said "Oh my son, your words pain me more. I know you have not swerved from virtue and for this reason you will attain noble region of pious men."

Thus saying Kausalya took Bharat on her lap and began to weep bitterly. Bharat's heart was rent with sorrow and he began to heave repeatedly deep sighs.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE CREMATION

On the day dawned Vasistha said to Bharat, "O

It is useless to lament any more. Now it is
cremate the body of the King, therefore, make
ments for it"

at then bowed to Vasistha and placed the body
ground, raising it from the oil vat Dasarath's
s pale and he looked as if buried in sleep Seeing
ly of the King thus prostrate on the ground
broke forth being overwhelmed with grief

King! What wrong thou hast committed by
ng Ram and Lakshman during my absence? I
een already deprived of Ram, now where have
ne leaving this poor soul? Ram has gone to the
and you too are dead, who can now devote him-
the task of protecting what the people possess
securing what they do not? Oh! father, the
has been widowed by your death, and the city
like a gloomy moonless night"

sistha, seeing Bharat bewailing thus, said, "Oh
, don't be overwhelmed with grief but perform
neral rites of the King with an undisturbed mind"
en Bharat at the words of Vasistha asked the
gas, Priests, and Acharyas to make haste Ritwigas
riests began to offer oblations into the fire that
ready been brought out from the fire chamber
en the servants in sorrowful hearts carried the

body of the King to the bank of the Saraju in a car. A large number of people went ahead distributing gold, silver and clothes. In the meantime the funeral pyre was prepared with Incense, Sandal, Aguru, Sarala, Padmaka, Devadaru and other fragrant things. The Ritwigas placed the body of the King in the funeral pyre and began to utter "mantras" offering oblations into the fire for the purification of the King in the next world. Singers of Samaveda began to sing the Samahymns. The queens and the aged people came in their litters, went round the King with the Ritwigas and were crying like Crouchis.

Then the queens bathed in the Saraju and performed with Bharat the watery rites for the dead and entering the city they passed ten days in great privations, by lying on the ground at night.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE FUNERAL RITES.

After the passing of ten days, Bharat performed the Sradh Ceremony of the King and on the twelfth day for the welfare of the King in the next world Bharat performed Sapindikaran ceremony of the second month and for the spiritual welfare of his father conferred on the Brahmins profuse wealth food goats cows, servants horses and cars.

On the thirteenth day Bharat came to the bank of

aju to gather the ashes of his father and being
 overwhelmed with grief began to cry aloud and seeing
 a desolated spot covered with ashes and embers
 the bones of his father had been reduced to ashes
 thus occurred the dissolution of his body, Bharat
 fell in sorrow. People raised him up as they do the
 banner of Indra. Satrughna too became mad
 with sorrow seeing Bharat thus smitten with grief. He
 fell up and down in restless steps saying, "We are
 overwhelmed in this sea of sorrow that owes its
 to Manthara, whose fierce monster is Kaikeyi.
 Hast thou gone leaving tender-hearted Bharat,
 will now look after us? Strange that the Earth was
 rent into pieces after losing her virtuous lord like

Alas! You are dead and Ram has gone to the
 forest, how can we live then? I shall cast myself into
 the fire and shall never return to Ayodhya in a fatherless
 brotherless state, but will repair to the forest."

The people were greatly distressed hearing Bharat and
 Satrughna lamenting thus, and the two princes rolled
 on the earth like two bulls in agony having their horns
 rent.

Then Vasistha raised Bharat from the ground and
 blessing him said, "O prince, this is the thirteenth
 day since the cremation of your father. The only thing
 remains to be done is to collect his bones. Why do you
 grieve then? It is not proper for you to be overwhelmed
 in grief since hunger, thirst, grief, ignorance, infirmity
 and death are inevitable in human life."

Then Bharat and Satrughna wiped off their eyes and
 stood like a banner of Indra sullied by wind and rain.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE RESOLUTION OF BHARAT

Then Sumitra's son, Satrugna finding Bharat resolved to go to Ram said "There is no doubt that Ram who gives shelter to all in distress, is our refuge. A woman has sent such Ram to the forest. Worshipful Lakshman is powerful why did he not deliver Ram by subduing father? The King who takes to unrighteous course at the words of a woman deserves to be suppressed even from the moral point of view "

When Satrugna was saying this to Bharat, the hump-backed came near the door wearing royal robes besmearing her limbs with sandal paste and adorning her body with ornaments and for having put on a girdle round her waist she looked like a female monkey tied with a rope.

Seeing that vicious hump-backed at the door Satrugna dragged her by force and said to Bharat

"Here is that vicious hump-backed wench, the cause of Ram's exile, and father's death do with her as you please."

Satrugna always obedient to Bharat's words addressing the inmates said, "This sorceress has brought miseries to our father and brothers let her now feel the consequence."

Saying this, Satrugna took the hump-backed by force and she began to resound the house with her piteous

Her maids got frightened at Satrughna's anger and a similar fate took shelter under Kausalya. Satrughna began to drag Manthara by force and all ornaments fell from her body, and the floor of the palace with scattered ornaments looked like the autumnal lawn with the stars. Satrughna began to oppress Manthara by force and to abuse Kaikeyi in harsh words. Manthara was greatly alarmed at this and sought protection from Bharat.

When Bharat seeing Satrughna beside himself with rage said, "A woman should not be killed, so forgive her. I would have killed Kaikeyi, but Ram would depose me as a murderer of my mother. So if you kill this hump-backed woman he won't speak with us in derision."

On hearing these words Satrughna desisted from the reproach and let Manthara off. As soon as Manthara was released she threw herself at Kaikeyi's feet and began to weep bitterly.

On the morning of the 14th day, a large number of people collected and said to Bharat,

"Who was our supreme Lord, King Dasarath has ascended to heaven by banishing Ram and Lakshman, so you are no longer King from to-day. The kingdom though now is without a King will come to ruins if the counsellors act on their united opinions. The counsellors are waiting for you with all the articles of coronation, so ascend the throne and save us from miseries."

Bharat seeing the articles of coronation said, "Eldest brother should ascend the throne, that is the custom of our family. So you should not request me about it."

Worshipful Ram should ascend the throne and I shall myself repair to the forest and live there for fourteen years. Now ask my army to get ready I shall myself bring back Ram from the forest. I shall carry with me the articles of coronation and have him crowned in the forest and shall bring him thence as fire from the place of sacrifice I shall never fulfil the desire of this so-called mother. Let the artizans prepare my way for the forest. Let them level the uneven paths, and let men capable of going to difficult and inaccessible places accompany me."

Hearing Bharat speaking thus all the people collected there said, May you be prosperous since you have so nobly resolved to confer the throne on the eldest. And they shed tears in joy

CHAPTER XXXV

BHARAT'S JOURNEY

Then carpenters wood cutters, expert diggers builders, cobblers, cooks, perfumers, makers of machines and bamboo made articles, people acquainted with geography active servants, and forward guides started in advance. When throngs of people rushed out in joy they resembled like the waves of an agitated ocean heaved up by the full moon. The pioneers with axes and spades went ahead and made paths by clearing the jungles. They cut down many trees, shrubs and rocks and planted trees where there was none. They levelled

high grounds and filled many deep ditches. Some
ridges, some bored earth and rocks for water and
d stones into fine dusts. They dug well with
dikes in waterless places. And the way of his
ay through many white plastered pavements,
woods bearing blossoms and rendered vocal by
es of wild birds. The road was decorated with
d flowers, and sprinkled with sandal showers,
appeared like a heavenly path.

se who received orders of pitching tents, set their
der auspicious stars in the places abounding in
ruits, and decorated them profusely. The tents
en surrounded by moats and were decorated with
of Saphire.

ewhere palaces were built, ramparts with dove-
re raised and seven-storied towers were raised,
sides of which stood various kinds of trees and
with crystal waters and full of fishes.

wards the end of the night preceding the day on
Bharat was to be consecrated for the Coronation
ony, eulogists began to sing praises of Bharat.
drums were struck by golden sticks and hundreds
h shells were blown to announce the break of the
Then Bharat rose with a sorrowful heart and asked
the music saying, "You must know that I am not
ing."

on addressing Satrugna he said, "You see they
een incited by Kaikeyi in these unjust things
has gone to the next world leaving me to infinite
s and who is our master has been banished to the

forest. There would not have been such a chaos if he were here.

While saying this Bharat was overwhelmed with grief

Then Vasistha versed in statecraft entered the Court ornamented with gold and gems and sat down upon a golden seat adorned with an elegant cover. He asked the warders soon to fetch Bharat, Satrughna counsellors and captains. Then intelligent Bharat entered the court full of educated people, rendered bright by the brilliance of their dress and ornaments, which looked like a full moon autumnal night.

Seeing Bharat entering the court, Vasistha said

"King Dasarath has repaired to Heaven by conferring the earth full of wealth and corns on you. Now get yourself crowned and rule the kingdom "

Prince Bharat was overwhelmed at Vasistha's speech and thinking of Ram he replied in a voice choked with tears.

"How a man like myself can usurp the throne of virtuous Ram and how being born of King Dasarath will rob one of his kingdom? This kingdom and myself belong to Ram. Oh I hermit it is not proper for you to speak to me thus. Eldest Ram like Dilip and Nahusa is the best of us all. If I follow this unrighteous course leading to Hell, I shall be a stain to the Ikshaku line. I do not in any way approve of the wrong committed by my mother and from here I bow down to Ram with my clasped palms. He is the real King of this kingdom and I must follow him

the courtiers then shed tears in delight at these words of Bharat.

When Bharat addressing the people said, "If I can not bring Ram from the forest I shall live with him like a man. I shall have to make all necessary arrangements in your presence to bring him back. I have already despatched in advance honorary labourers, servants and guards, now I shall set out myself."

Hearing this Bharat, attached to his brother, asked Sumantra to announce his departure to the forest and to use his forces for that. The people and the chiefs were extremely glad at the proposal of bringing Ram. And wife of every soldier cheerfully spurred her husband to make haste in the matter. The Captains gave orders to Bharat in swift conveyances.

Bharat then asked Sumantra to fetch his car soon, and tell the Captains to draw up the forces in march-ready.

When the day dawned, Bharat, eager to meet Ram, went in his car, and before him proceeded the counsellors and the priests. Thousands of horses and elephants followed him. Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra gladly accompanied him in glittering cars. The citizens cheered each other in joy and said when they would see him as dark as a cloud and the remover of world's grief, "The sun dispels all darkness, so his very sight will remove all our sorrows," they said,

Then, famous merchants, jewellers, potters, weavers,

smiths, sawers, workers with peacock feathers,¹ glass makers, perforators of gem workers in ivory wool-growers, armourers, persons expert in mixing cement, perfumers, goldsmiths, shampooers, physicians, helpers in bath, incense makers, wine sellers washermen tailors actors with a number of gay women cooks fishermen persons versed in the Vedas, virtuous Brahman followed Bharat in carts being attired in their best apparels, daubed in red unguent powder

After passing a long distance they arrived at Srīngaverapur on the bank of the Ganges. There Guha the Nishada chief was ruling the province with his kinsmen. Then Bharat's army came to the Ganges full of Chakravakas. Bharat asked his men to halt there and he wished to perform Tarpan for the spiritual good of his father. After disposing his men Bharat thought of the means by which he would be able to persuade Ram to return to Ayodhya.

1 The word is Mayuraka—it may mean, peacock catcher peacock dealer or worker in peacock-feathers.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE MEETING WITH GUHA

seeing a vast number of people and a mighty
ected on the bank of the Ganges said to kinsmen,
here is a vast sea of troops, indeed I do not see

From that huge Kovidara tree in the flag
g from the chariot it seems foolish Bharat has
perhaps he will first enchain us or kill us first
will kill exiled Ram He has intended to kill
securing complete possession of the kingdom
oth my Liege and friend Now clad yourselves
armours and wait on the bank of the Ganges.
trong retainers get themselves ready to throw
at the time of Bharat's crossing the Ganges
lreds of Kaivarta youths accourted in mail wait
less in five hundred boats If Bharat has no
gn against Ram his army may safely cross the

ng given these directions to his kinsmen, the
the Nishadas went to meet Bharat with meat,
honey

g Guha coming to Bharat, Sumantra said, "Look
Ram's dear friend Guha is coming hither with
men Let him come to you This old chief
verything about the Dandaka forest and he also
here Ram and Lakshman are now residing"
at at once agreed to Sumantra's proposal
the Nishad-chief cheerfully approached Bharat

and addressing him said "O prince! You may consider this country as your home. You have deceived us not by sending any message beforehand. Now I place all my resources at your disposal please make yourself comfortable in the house of your servant. The Nishadas have stored wild fruits, fresh and dry meat, and wood land meal and I pray let the army sup here to-night and set out in the next morning.

Bharat replied, My men have been already entertained by your kind wishes now tell me by what way I shall reach the hermitage of Bharadwaj."

Then Guha replied in folded palms, "The Nishadas are acquainted with all these places they will go with you and I shall myself accompany you. Now tell me with what intention you are going to Ram? To tell you the truth the sight of your vast army has rather filled me with great apprehension towards Ram.

Hearing Guha speaking thus Bharat replied in sweet words, Let such time never come when I may commit any mischief to Ram. He is my elder and adorable like my father. I am now repairing to the forest to bring back Ram. I tell you the truth, don't doubt me even for a moment.

The lord of the Nishada was greatly delighted at these words and said,

O prince! Since you have renounced the Kingdom obtained without any effort all glory be unto you. I don't find anybody like you on earth. Your fame will for ever spread in the three worlds since you have intended to bring back Ram from miseries."

As they were thus talking the sun grew dim at each of night

Ram was greatly pleased with Guha's hospitality and went to bed with Satrugghna. Anxious thoughts began to corrode his heart, as fire burns a tree, hidden in its hollow. As the snowy Himalayas with the heat of the sun, so perspiration on his body. He was oppressed by the heavy burden of grief, as if he was then seized with mental fever.

Ram tried to console Bharat, and in the course of conversation he spoke about the good qualities of Bharat, stating that when he assured Lakshman of his friendship and love for Ram and offered him and his men for the protection of Ram at night Lakshman thankfully declined his service and took the task himself, saying that he had no need of rest or rest since the best of heroes was lying on his back with his wife, and when Lakshman was lamenting for the misfortunes that befallen Ram and his friends the night was over, they then matted their hair and crossed the Ganges through his help."

During this Bharat was deeply buried in thoughts, and shortly after he fainted in grief. At this the chief grew pale and began to shake like a tree in a quake. Satrugghna, who was close by, began to comfort him by embracing Bharat. Kausalya and other women came near Bharat and began to cry aloud. Kausalya said with tears, 'My boy! Are you ill? The royal family now depends on you. Ram and Lakshman have gone to the forest. I have sustained my

life only by seeing you. The king is dead and you are now our protector ”

Bharat soon recovered his senses and asked Guha with tearful eyes, O Nishada chief ! tell me where worshipful Ram passed the night with Sita ? Upon which they lay ? Which food they took ?

Guha then narrated everything and said O prince ! I procured various kinds of fruits and provisions for Ram but when I offered them to him he accordingly to the Kshatriya custom instead of accepting the presents returned everything, saying with entreaties, 'My friend, it is our duty to give and not to take anything. Then Lakshman brought water from the Ganges, and after drinking that he fasted with Sita and Lakshman drank the remnant left after Ram's drink. Then they said their evening prayers with a devoted heart. After the prayer Lakshman gathered Kusha grass and prepared bed for Ram and when Ram and Janaki lay down he retired from the place after washing their feet. O Prince ! This is the Ingudi tree beneath which Ram passed the night with his wife on the grass."

Hearing these words Bharat saw the bed used by Ram near the Ingudi tree, and then addressing his mother said, "Look, here noble Ram passed his night lying on the ground. It was certainly not worthy of him who is born of the great King Dasarath. How can he now lie on the ground who passed his nights on beds furnished with soft skins and excellent cloths ? How does he who was in the habit of sleeping in high mansions, in delightfully cold apartments—coloured like

THE RAMĀYAN

ls—with golden floor and silver yard, provided
 ant beds, decked with profusion of flowers,
 with sandal and Aguru, and resonant with
 the parrots, and who was roused every
 with sweet music, by the jingling sounds of the
 female attendants, and by the songs of praise
 ves and bards now lies on the ground? It is
 to believe that Ram now lies on the ground.
 like a dream It seems nothing is mightier

Here is the bed that still bears the impress
 limbs for changing his sides on it Look, how
 over the hard soil has been crushed by the
 of his limbs Sita probably lay on this bed, for
 there are still found scattered grains of gold
 the time of lying down Sita's cloth somehow
 it, for silken fibres are still attached to it
 's bed is always pleasant to the wife, or how
 ch a delicate lady lie on it? Ah! blessed is
 n for following Ram at such juncture The
 lead and Ram has gone to the forest, the earth
 be quite helpless like a boat without a helms-
 rom to-day I shall observe the vow of a forest-
 shall gladly pass fourteen years in the forest by
 barks, matted locks, and by living on fruits
 s and sleeping on the ground. Satiugbna will
 h me and worshipful Ram with Lakshman rule
 odhya Let him be crowned by the Brahmans
 desire be fulfilled through Providential grace"
 at passed the night on the bank of the Ganges.
 morning he roused Satiugbna from sleep and

told him to get ready for the journey. At daybreak, Guha came and enquired about Bharat's welfare. Bharat after answering his questions asked to help him to cross the Ganges with his men.

At this, Guha came back quickly and roused his men in helping Bharat to cross the Ganges. Shortly his men ferched five hundred boats. Besides these Guha brought a magnificent barge called Swastika furnished with oars and pinions. Its inside was covered with a pale yellow coloured blanket worked with gold. And the Nishadas were playing music on its deck. Bharat then got upon the boat with Satrugna. First of all priests and protectors got upon it, then Kausalya and other queens boarded the boat. At that time of departure the troops set fire to their temporary sheds.

The boats then swiftly reached the other bank of the Ganges. Some ferried women some horses, some bullocks and some precious cars.

CHAPTER XXXVII

IN THE HERMITAGE OF BHARADWAJ

At a time Bharat put off his arms and dress, and in a piece of silken cloth he went on foot with his followers, placing Vasistha in front of him. Near the hermitage he dismissed his counsellors and entered the asylum after Vasistha.

Seeing Vasistha, Bharadwaj rose from his seat and his pupils to fetch Arghya. Bharat then bowed to him. Seeing Bharat in company of Vasistha, Bharadwaj understood him to be king Dasarath's son. He offered the guests water to wash their feet and to eat. Bharadwaj enquired after the welfare of the king. He knew that Dasarath was dead so he did not say anything about him. Then Vasistha and Bharat enquired of Bharadwaj about the welfare of his wife, his pupils, his deer and his birds.

After answering all these he asked Bharat about the cause of his visit and whether he intended any mischief.

At hearing Bharadwaj's words he replied in a voice choked with tears.

"I am undone if you too put such questions. No harm will be done to Ram by me. I am not least satisfied with the action of my mother. I have come to pay back Ram by paying my homage to his feet. Please dispel all your doubts from your heart. Tell me where

Bharadwaj then joyfully returned. This is quite worthy of you. Being born in the line of Raghu control of senses, righteous instincts and serving the superiors are your duties. I knew your intention from before but I asked you this just for the confirmation of your reputation. I know Ram. He is now living with Lakshman and Janaki in the Chitrakuta hills. You go there to-morrow but spend the day in my hermitage."

Bharat then stayed there for Bharadwaj's hospitality and thanked him saying that he had already offered to him what could be procured in the forest. Bharadwaj then wanted to entertain Bharat's army and asked why he had left them behind? Bharat replied, O Saint, it is in fear of you I could not bring my army along with me. Be he a king or a prince he should carefully avoid encroaching upon the hermitage of an ascetic. Horses, elephants, and men have come with covering a large tract of ground. I have left them behind fearing that it might cause disturbance to the hermitage.

Bharadwaj then asked Bharat to order his army to come to his hermitage. Bharat did as directed.

Bharadwaj then entered the chamber of sacrificial fire and having rubbed his lips twice with water invoked God Vishwakarma for the entertainment of his guests.

"I invoke you Vishwakarma expert in all works, for the entertainment of my guests. I also invoke the three rulers of the world like Indra for it. Let all the streams that flow towards the west in zig zag course appear hither. Let some of them run with Mairaya liquor some with refined wines, some with cool waters

like sugarcane juice I invoke all the gods and
 ses, Gandharbas, Ghrítachí, Vishachí, Mitrakeshí,
 usha, Nagdatta Hema and Soma residing in the
 I also invoke the fairies that go to Indra and
 born Brahma to come with Tamvarus And let
 wonderful forest that exists in the north Kuru,
 leaves are ornaments and attires, and whose
 are beautiful damsels, appear here Let God
 give the different kinds of food, meat, wines and
 drinks and beautiful garlands "

aharshí Bharadwaj by virtue of his penance and
 cism employed his voice in uttering the Mantras
 epically in consonance with Siksha He then ceased
 prayed for the appearance of the deities, facing the

hen the gods thus invoked began to appear one by
 Sweet Zephyr began to blow by carrying perfumes
 the Malaya and the Dardura Hills, and clouds
 n to rain flowers Heavenly music was heard ,
 Apsaras began to dance and the Gandharvas to sing.
 ids of Vina were being heard Sweet music seemed
 cend the sky and penetrate the earth Troops of
 rat in astonishment surveyed the wonderful deeds of
 wakarma. A square plot of level ground extending
 leagues on all sides was covered with lustrous green
 s, like blue sapphire, and on it stood Bels Kapithwas,
 fruit trees, Lemons, Amalakís, Mangoes and other
 s bent down with fruits. Pleasant Chaitraratha
 st was transfigured from the north There arose
 te edifices with four sections , stables for horses and

elephants mansions furnished with beds, and seats, various kinds of provisions, garlands, cleansed vessels and apparels. Bharat then entered one of those palaces with counsellors and priests.

At that time twenty thousand women sent by prajapati and another twenty thousand sent by Kuvera adorned with pearls and gems appeared on the scene and created a havoc by their beauty. Then came another twenty thousand damsels from the heavenly Nandan forest. Gandharva king, Narada Tamvaru and Gopa began to sing before Bharat. Visrakeshu and other heavenly damsels began to dance. Heavenly wreathes and flowers were seen in heaps at Prayaga. The Bel tree played upon Mridanga Vibhitaka kept time and Aswatha tree began to dance¹. Sinsapa Amalaki Jamvu trees and Mallika creepers appeared in the forms of women and they began to say "Those who drink let them drink, those who are hungry feed sumptuously on well-dressed meat and sweets. Seven or eight women sometimes took a man on the bank of the river helped him in bath, some shampooed his limbs and some offered him drink." Thus Bharat's hosts were entertained, each one enjoyed to his heart's content. No body had any dirty linen on him but each one was dressed in clean white clothes. Nobody looked sad or dirty but each one was bright and joyous, and every one gazed in wonder at gold and silver dishes decorated with

1 An out and out miracle quite difficult to understand. It may be a poetical hyperbole for a grand entertainment.

and filled with clean white rice. Those vessels
 ed fruit-juice, flavoury soups, curries and meat
 , and boars Wells were filled with Payasha and
 as began to distill honey ! Tanks were filled with
 and smoking venisons, meat of deer, cocks, pea-
 were kept in heaps Vessels for rice, curries, and
 d thousands golden washing bowls were kept there.
 s were filled with curds. Tanks were filled with
 milk and sugar. Bathing tubs contained scented
 ent powders, scented grass, like Kalka, and other
 , of bath were deposited there. Sticks for cleansing
 sandal paste, bright mirrors, sandals, combs,
 s, collyrium-pots, umbrellas, bows, mails, beds,
 and drinking troughs for horses, elephants and
 were all kept in readiness The whole thing
 ed like a wonderful dream, and every one was
 astonished at this, and Bharat's troops passed
 ime like gods in the Nandana The soldiers soon
 e intoxicated with wine, and garlands of flowers
 ttered, trampled and crushed Bharat was greatly
 l with the hermit's hospitality and being desirous of
 ig Ram appeared before Bharadwaj Bharadwaj
 whether he had a pleasant night and whether his
 were satisfied or not. Bharat said that he and
 ople were more than satisfied and asked how far
 here lay the hermitage of virtuous Ram ?
 aradwaj said, "About five miles from this place
 s a hill called the Chitrakuta situated in a deep
 Its woods and streams are quite pleasant The
 Bhagirathi flows by the north of this mountain.

Your brother is living there by erecting a thatched hut. Proceed some distance along the southern bank of the Jamuna and then turn to your left and if you proceed along it you will find Ram.

Hearing this, Kausalya and Sumitra bowed to the saint's feet and Kaikeyi, despised by all and overwhelmed with shame after bowing to the saint stood at some distance with a sad mien near Bharat. Bharadwaj then wanted to know fully about his mother. Bharat replied

"Whom you find emaciated with fast and sorrows is my father's queen—the mother of Ram and she who stands with a dejected look like a branch of withered karnika flowers is Sumitra. Heroic Lakshman and Satrugna are her sons. And for whom Ram and Lakshman have been banished into the forest and who is the cause of King Dasarath's death there stands dishonourable¹ Kaikeyi, though looks honourable in appearance, but foolish, proud irritable and cruel. This sinful woman is my mother. My misfortunes have been brought by her."

Thus saying Bharat began to heave deep sighs with red hot eyes like a panting serpent.

Then noble Bharadwaj said "Don't blame your mother. This exile of Ram will surely produce good at the end to all."

Then Bharat after taking leave of Bharadwaj asked his men to get ready for their departure. At his orders

1 Arya—means honourable. Anarya—dishonourable

Thus how in course of time, the distinction between the conquerors and the conquered came to be exp. casid.

army was at once on its move and it proceeded to the western bank of the Ganges, by startling the birds of the forest by fright. And the wild animals stampeded in fear in different directions. Thus covered a great distance.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE FOREST-LIFE

As then nearing the Chitrakuta said, "From what I heard it seems that we have arrived at the place of Bharadwaj. This is the Chitrakuta and the Ganges flows at its feet. There stretches deep forest, the clouds far and wide, and its peaks now being covered by my huge elephants, trees standing over the forest shedding their flowers like clouds pouring rains. Look, Satrugna, these tracts belong to the Narmada, and deer, like autumnal clouds, are in the air. The soldiers bearing shields have covered their heads with flowers like southerners ! Dusts from the hoops of horses have darkened the sky, but to the benefit the wind is fast clearing them away. The dense forest, devoid of human beings, to-day looks to me like populous Ayodhya ! How beautiful the bucks and does, they appear beautiful as if pictures ! Let my army now retire and make room for Ram and Lakshman."

His men on entering the forest found a column

of smoke rising from the woods. Thereupon th y came to Bharat and said. It is impossible to find fire where there is no human habitation so we assure you that Ram and Lakshman now reside in this forest or some a.cetics like Ram." Bharat then asked them to observe silence and wait there. Bharat then proceeded towards the rising smoke taking Sumantra and Dhriti with him.

At that time, Ram who had been residing at the Chitrakuta for some time said to Janaki to cheer her up. Janaki! at the sight of these beautiful hills I don't so much feel for the loss of kingdom nor so keenly for the separation from friends. How beautiful are the hills, the resort of wild birds all round the year how high are its cliffs as if piercing the blue sky how rich with minerals for which the hills appear richly variegated in colours some parts look silvery white some purple some look yellow like Manjistha some blue like sapphire some glittering like crystals, and some like Ketaki blossoms, and somewhere star like lustre of mercury is seen. How tigers bears and innocent deer roam about the forest. How it abounds in magnificent trees. Kinnara pairs live happily in these valleys. Close is the sporting ground of the Vidyadharis. Excellent clothes and arms hang from the branches of the trees. Here is a waterfall there is a rivulet there is a fountain and the mountain looks like an elephant emitting temporal sweat! Sweet breeze delights all by wafting fragrance of flowers from the caves. Janaki! If I live with you and Lakshman even for a long time in this forest sorrow will never overtake me in any

feel great delight in this beautiful hill abounding
 s and flowers and in tuneful birds Don't you
 ppy at these sights, pleasing to the body, mind
 ech? My forefathers have assigned forest life
 suited for the attainment of salvation, the only
 or all worldly sorrows and anxieties after death
 ow vast crags of various hues are scattered all
 some parts of the mountain appear like pretty
 , and some like houses even! At night, the
 ls¹ glow with their own energy (lustre) like
 of fire These are the beds (haunts) of pleasure-
 people, they have been made with coverlets
 agaras, Punnagas, Birch leaves and lotus petals
 ow they partook of fruits, how scattered lie the
 l garlands of lotuses! It seems that Chitrakuta
 en high by penetrating the earth Its peaks are
 beautiful and they surpass in beauty Vamvanka-
 ūvara's city, and the city of Indra and north
 If I pass these fourteen years with you and
 an by following righteous path then I shall surely
 happiness for observing the custom and duties
 race"

en lotus-eyed Ram emerging from the Chitrakuta
 ing Janakī or moon-like face said, "My darling,
 ows the Mandakīni Its banks are most beautiful
 and cranes always croak on them, and various

shadhi—it means annual plants but here it is doubtful
 the world signifies them or it means medicinal herbs or gems
 erals

fruits-bearing and flowery trees stand on them. Its descent is really beautiful. Look, how the thirsty deer drinks its muddy water near the bank. Look the ascetics with matted locks and bathing in the river and anchorites with raised hands are worshipping the sun. The tops and branches of the trees crowned with fruits and flowers are swaying in the wind it seems as if the hill itself is in dance. Look how hosts of flowers being moved by the breeze are kissing the crystal stream of the Mandakini. The sight of the Chitrakuta and the Mandakini appears much more delightful than city life. Virtuous saints daily bathe in this stream so bathe with me as my companion and gather red and white lotuses from there. Just consider the hill to be Ayodhya and the Mandakini as the Saraju. Virtuous Lakshman is obedient to me and you are also favourably disposed towards me, so I feel myself immensely happy. Bathing thrice in this river and living on wild fruits and roots and drinking honey in your company I do not even crave for the kingdom of Ayodhya."

Saying this Ram began to walk with Janaki over the Chitrakuta, blue as the collyrium dye.

Thus Ram showed to Janaki wild woodland sceneries and as they turned towards their cottage, Ram found a beautiful cave in the slope of the mountain, in a shadowy reclusé. Its floor was strewn with minerals and paved with stones. It was situated in a shadowy vale where the trees were bent down with blossoms and fruits and gay birds sang all the time.

gazed with wonder and pointing the cave to
 1,

Vaidehi ! Do you like that beautiful place ?
 us rest here for a while. Look at that block of
 square, so smooth as if it was set for you !
 Now yonder flowery shrub, like a *kesar* tree, over-
 your head "

Janaki, in soft and tender accents, that betrayed
 , said,

ower of Raghu's line ! My pleasure is to do thy
 is enough for me to know your wish You have
 vandered long

saying in gentle tone, obedient Sita of spotless
 and graceful limbs, went to the stone But imme-
 Ram turned to his spouse and exclaimed

ok, Sita ! This flowery vale seems to be the
 haunt of sylvan gods and goddessess Look,
 pines torn by the tusks of elephants distil their
 now the whole forest has grown resonant with the
 otes of cuckoo, Bhiringaraj and other melodious
 of the wood Look, how the creeper has twined
 tendrils round the blossoming mango tree, so
 now your arms round me when there is none near

s saying Ram embraced his spouse, and loving
 beautiful as the Goddess of wealth and beauty
 on her husband's arms, and a mighty thrill of
 through his frame

in loving cares dubbed his finger in vermilion
 mineral dye of the rock and put a lovely circular

mark on Sita's brow which seemed to gleam as the morning sun, whereupon Sita looked like the beautiful goddess of dawn.

Ram then overflowing with joy plucked some blossoms from the *kesara* tree and with them he decked the lovely tresses of Sita.

Thus after resting a while on the rocky ledge, Ram proceeded with Maitheli towards a pleasant shade where various kinds of creatures were straying about. Sita finding a monkey coming near her clung to Ram in fear and her royal consort soothed her by lacing his mighty arm round her slender waist and scared away the ape. And from that close embrace the red gleaming mark on Sita's brow was printed on Ram's expanded chest. And when the monkey fled away Sita seeing that red mark stamped on Ram's chest gleefully burst forth in a ring of laughter. Then seeing at a distance a bunch of bright Asoka flowers shaking in the breeze, as if the tree was in flames, Sita fondly said, O pride of Raghu's line! Let us bend our steps thither where the red Asoka blooms."

As divine Siva with his holy consort Uma roams through the vast regions of the Himalayas, so Ram strayed about with Sita in that delightful forest and the happy pair sported themselves to their hearts content and in their delightful sports each one put a crown of flowers upon the other's head.

Then after strolling the green woods, surveying the lovely spots there, they returned to their snug cottage where every thing was kept tidy and quite-

by Lakshman out of deep brotherly love
 an hurried to meet them in the way, showed
 the day's hunt the ten black-deer killed by
 ten darts, and their well-dressed meat Ram
 greatly pleased at this and addressing Sita said,
 my darling! This venison is fresh and sweet to
 eat, and it has been well-roasted too, now supply
 your gifts "

then cheerfully spread the woodland meal and
 before the brothers After Ram and Lakshman
 their meals and washed their mouths, Janaki
 her own repast

the venison was set apart for being dried, and Ram
 tried to scare away the crows from it But Ram,
 to great amusement, found Sita much distressed by
 the crow, that on sooner it was scared away, it again
 came near the meat Sita chased the crow
 and again, but all in vain, it rather threatened
 to peck her with its beak, wings and claws Ram
 finding Sita thus annoyed by the crow, and her
 cheeks glowing with rage, her lips quivering in
 anger and frowns darkening her lovely brow
 he rebuked the bird for its impudence, but appar-
 ently it paid no heed to Ram's words, but flew again at
 her At this, Ram fixed an arrow with mantras to his
 bow and aimed at the crow The bird sprang upon its
 prey, but the magic shaft followed wherever it flew
 now then flew back to Ram and fell at his feet and
 died for its life
 When hearing the bird entreating for its life said,

"Finding Sita much distressed I took her side and set this arrow with mantras to take your life but since you ask for forgiveness and to spare your life, I shall grant thy prayer—I must protect the suppliant. But my shaft is never discharged in vain so give up some part of your body in exchange of your life."

Thinking that it was better to live than to die, the crow yielded an eye and the arrow at once struck the crow in the eye. Sita in deep amazement stared at this. The bird then flew away where it liked.

Thus being refreshed when Ram pointed to Sita the lovely rill running beneath the hill.

Meanwhile Bharat's army drew near Ram saw a cloud of dust raised by a marching army and heard a deafening uproar and finding the wild animals running to and fro he said Hark, Lakshman! A terrific noise like the rumbling of a thunder-cloud is being heard in the woods, and deer elephants, buffaloes and lions are scampering away in fear. Just ascertain its cause. Has any king or prince come hither for hunting? Or is it due to the ravages of some ferocious animal? Quickly ascertain the cause.

Thereupon Lakshman soon climbed upon a flowery Sal tree and began to survey all round.

Lakshman at last saw a vast army marching towards the east, and addressing Ram said O worshipful Lord! Please put out the fire now and enter the cave with Janaki. Now put on your armour and get yourself ready by fixing string to your bow and have the arrows near at hand."

said, "First try to ascertain to whom belongs

Lakshman answered flaming with rage, "My Kaikeyi's son, Bharata, in order to remove all from his side, has come to kill us. The Kovidara chariot is visible behind the yonder big tree. We are merrily marching towards us. Either let us alter in the mountain, or wait here with bows in hands. To-day I shall see Bharat, the root cause of our sorrows and for whom you have lost your throne and kingdom. He is your enemy and he deserves to be killed. It will be just and lawful to kill him who first injures. I shall kill Bharat and then you will rule over the earth. Greedy Kaikeyi will to-day find her son slain at my hands, like a man by the elephant's tusk. To-day, I shall kill Kaikeyi with Manthara. I shall cast my anger on her, as people set fire to woods. I shall pay off the debt to my bow and arrows by killing Bharat to-day."

On finding Lakshman thus angry addressed him in the following words, "When mighty Bharat has himself killed, what is the use of bows and arrows? I have no kingdom to observe my father's pledge, then what shall I do? What is killing Bharat? What is kingdom to me? What can be acquired by the destruction of friends, relatives, and of near and dear ones, is like a poisoned food which I will never partake. And I swear to you that religious merit, wealth, object of desire and all possessions all that I may want is for you all, dear brother, by my sword, that if I wish for the kingdom

it is for the happiness and maintenance of my brother Lakshman! It is not difficult for me even to possess this sea-girdled earth, but I do not crave even for Indra's state by unrighteous means. What more? If I wish for any happiness depriving you all, may fire reduce that to a heap then and there. It seems, dear Bharat after returning from his maternal uncle's house to Ayodhya has been greatly mortified at the news of our exile so he has come here to see us just out of deplorable love. Don't ascribe any other motive to his presence here. He does not wish us any harm even in his thoughts Lakshman! why are you apprehensive about him? Never utter any harsh expression against him? If you speak anything rude against Bharat it will in fact be against me. I know not how even in times of peril the son can slay his father or a brother his brother dear as one's own life? If you have said all these for kingdom then I shall ask Bharat in his presence to confer the kingdom on you. He will never disagree to my word if I say this."

When virtuous Ram said this, Lakshman was overwhelmed with shame and with diffidence said "Perhaps father has come to see you."

Ram too finding Lakshman confounded with shame said

"So it seems and he has come to take us back for he knows that we, who are accustomed to pass our days in ease and luxury are now suffering from the hardships of forest life. But why I do not see his white royal

? It feels my heart with great misgivings Now
from the tree "

2 meantime, in order to avoid all disturbance,
sked his army to take their quarters at different
the hill

Bharat asked Satrughna to look for Ram and
in with Guha and others, and he would walk on
a priests and counsellors and that his mind would
rest or peace till he found out Ram.

at then walked through the flowery woods and
mbing up a Sal tree he found smoke rising out
's cottage At the sight of smoke Bharat
ed that Ram must have been living there and
arwhelmed with delight at this thought. It
to him as if he had crossed a turbulent sea. He
ceeded with Guha towards the asylum of Ram.

time of setting out, Bharat said to Vasistha to
s mothers without delay. Bharat then proceeded
atrughna in hurried steps eager to meet Ram.
ra who too was pining for Ram followed
na

er proceeding some distance Bharat saw a cottage
es like the hermitage of a monk He found fuel
owers in front of the cottage, and heaps of dry
f deer and buffaloes kept for the prevention of

at then cheerfully pointed out to Satrughna
ve arrived at the place indicated by Bharadwaj,
s the Mandakini is close by I find barks sus-
from the trees, and it seems to me that they

have been set up by Lakshman to mark the path as he has to leave the cottage sometimes at unusual hours. There rises dense smoke of fire which the anchorites carefully preserve in the forest. I shall soon get sight of saintly Ram devoted to his superiors.

Bharat then reaching the bank of the Mandakini said. Cursed is my life, worshipful Ram is passing his days in meditation and yoga. He has been suffering all these for me. I won't be able to bear this odium. I shall throw myself at his feet and shall also entreat Janaki and Lakshman by holding their feet."

When Bharat was thus regretting he saw from distance the beautiful, sacred cottage of Ram covered with the leaves of Sala palms and Ashwakarna. He found there the formidable bow plated with gold, like the famous one of Indra, the accomplisher of mighty deeds and bringer of death to the enemies. As the Nether region looks resplendent with snakes the quiver was full of sharp arrows flaming as the sun. There were swords in golden sheathes shields and gloves¹ spangled with gold. There stood a spacious altar and fire was burning to its north east. Bharat saw all these and at last found lotus-eyed and fire-like effulgent Ram seated on a skin like God Sayambhu with Sita and Lakshman in the cottage. He was clad in bark and a black deer-skin and wore matted locks on his head.

Bharat thus seeing the ruler of the earth broke forth in grief. Alas, who was attended by the courtiers is

¹Finger protector—the word is Angulitran in the original

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rounded by herds of wild deer ! He is now bare skin who used to wear costly apparels ! was decorated with beautiful garlands is now matted locks on his head ! The body that was ed with precious sandal is now stained with

who used to perform great sacrifices with what hardships is now observing religious rites ! Alas ! suffering all these for me. Shame upon my self "

ing this, Bharat approached Ram with a ing body, and before he came to close quarters down on the ground being blinded with tears fell down he exclaimed

Arya !" But his voice was choked Hes ilenty at Ram He again attempted to speak but could As he uttered "Arya" his voice was again

en Satrughna with tearful eyes adored the feet n Ram embraced him and began to shed tears ie sun and the moon meet Sukra (Venus, and pati (Jupiter) in the sky, so Ram and Lakshman amantra and Guha The denizens of forest began d tears at the sight of these four princes

CHAPTER XXXIX

MEETING WITH RAM

Here Bharat was lying prostrate on the ground with folded palms. His face was dark with sorrow his locks were matted, and he was clad in bark and was incapable of being gazed upon like the Dooms-day sun. When Ram recognised the great hero he embraced him and took him on his lap. Ram then questioned him with great care.

"My boy ! Where is father now ? You shouldn't have come here while he is alive. I meet you after a long time since your stay in your maternal uncle's house. Now tell me why have you come to this deep jungle ? Is father alive or has he gone to the other world being afflicted with sorrow for my separation ? You are still a boy has the kingdom been wrested from your hands ? Dost thou not minister to the wishes of our father ? Is our righteous father—the performer of Rajasuya and the Ashwamedha sacrifices—in good health ? Does our family priest Vasistha receive due honours ?

"Are Queen Kausalya and Sumitra doing well ? Is not worshipful Kaikeyi passing her days in happiness ? Does not noble Sujayna conversant with rituals perform your ceremonies ? Do not intelligent people look after the sacrificial fire ? Do they not inform you in due time about the sacrifice ? Don't you show proper

to the deities, father, father-like preceptors, the
 physicians and to your employees? Do you
 preceptor Sudhanva who is versed in polity and
 use of weapons employed both with mantras and
 it? Have you engaged high-born, valiant, wise,
 self-controlled persons as your counsellors who can
 you read the import of signs? If counsel is well-
 by wise counsellors then success attends in every-

I hope, you are not subject to sleep, and you
 proper hour, and decide about the means of
 ing your objects towards the end of night I think
 consult yourself and others in your actions and
 your decisions always secret, and always quickly
 rm things that can be easily done and which are
 icious to public weal The frontier chiefs no doubt
 what you have accomplished or what is about
 completed, but they do not know what remains
 to be done They cannot even guess or infer by
 ming what you and your counsellors wish to
 secret Dost thou not wish for a single wise man
 ad of thousands of fools? In times of financial
 ulties, wise people help us in every way, but if the
 be surrounded by hundreds or thousands of fools,
 cannot depend upon a single person In short, even
 gle capable minister may secure immense prosperity
 he king My boy, Don't you appoint best men to
 highest offices, mediocres in middling situations,
 low class people for low work?"

'Don't you entrust most responsible works to
 isters who are men of character, above bribery and

have been holding the office through hereditary succession (from father to son) Do people even when severely punished show any disrespect towards you? Do the priests scorn you as women hate lustful people who uses force against them? He, who does not put an end to an unfaithful servant clever in polity or a valiant warrior covetous of riches is himself ruined in turn Do you not follow this policy? Don't you appoint an intelligent high born and a devoted warrior as your General? Don't you honour those men of rank who are well versed in militarism and have given proofs of their prowess before the public? Don't you pay your army regularly and provide them with their rations in due time? Do you make any delay in this? If salaries and rations are not given in proper time, the employees get annoyed with their master and then all sorts of troubles¹ follow Are the chiefs of the clans devoted to you? Are they prepared even to die for you? Do you employ educated citizens possessed with presence of mind and boldness of speech, as your emissaries? Have you gathered informations through spies about eighteen² expedients of others and fifteen

¹ A sound piece of military administration. Hunger they say is the mother of socialism.

² The following are the persons alluded to here :-

(1) Minister (2) Priest, (3) Heir-apparent, (4) General (5) Wardens, (6) Superintendent of Jail, (7) Treasurer (8) Conveyors of Royal commands, (9) Interrogators of law called Pradvivaka i. e. pleaders, (10) Judges, (11) Jury—deciders of customs etc. (12) Paymaster of salaries, (13) Distributor of pensions after service

own? Do you slight the enemy who comes
rough driven off before?

nk you do not concern yourself with atheistic
ans All those puerile persons proud of their
g can only bring evil to others, and inspite of
stence of excellent religious literature they vainly
themselves in barren sophistical arguments
ou not defending Ayodhya- the land of our
rs provided with strong city-gates, and full of
ul palaces, inhabited by the noble and energetic
people, and where there is plenty of elephants,
tanks, temples, chaityas, jewels, and corns,
border lands are well-cultivated, and where
is good society, where men and women are happy
y, and where festivities are always held, where
is no room for malice or wickedness, and where
is no ferocious animal, where cultivation is
d with waters of the river Is not that wealthy
nce free from all disturbing elements? Do not
ators and breeders enjoy your favour? Do not
eople follow their vocations and live in happiness?
ou not maintain them by preventing their evils
oing good to them? It is your duty to protect
no are living under your jurisdiction My boy!
the women folk safe through your care? Don't

ity-Administrators (15) Rangers of forests, (16) Magistrate,
justice of the peace and (18) Chieftains of forts Fifteen except-
e first three, includes the rest Mr Griffith has omitted
hapter altogether

you honour them ? Do you confide any secret to them ? What interest do you take in the collection of animals ? There are many forests in the kingdom full of elephants Don't you look after them ? Don't you rear mares and female-elephants ? Don't you enter the court in royal robes ? Don't you travel along the streets even rising early in the morning ? Do the servants approach you fearlessly or they keep themselves away ? You see, a middle course between too much familiarity and inaccessibility is good Are the forts well provided with wealth, corns, water arms, machines, artisans and soldiers ? Is not your income greater than your expenditure ? Do you give anything to the undeserving ? Are you not open handed in the worship of deities, in the performance of rites to the deceased ancestors in the services of guests, Brahmans warriors, and friends ? Do you punish from covetousness a good man accused of a crime without having him tried first and without finding him guilty by a competent judge versed in the Shastras ? Do you set free from motives of gain a thief arrested with stolen property and confronted with interrogatories ? Do not your counsellors impartially judge between parties whether rich or poor when they are involved in disputes ? When false cases are not justly tried i.e. when there is a failure of justice, the tears of the innocent bring about the ruin of the princes. Haven't you won over children the aged, the physicians and important persons by liberal gifts ? Do you oppose righteousness for gain or for the gratification of your senses ? Have you eschewed

, untruthfulness, inattention, anger, procrastination, evil company, idleness, gratification of the consultation with one person about the king-consultation with wicked persons, divulgence of non-performance of an action already decided non-commencement of work in the morning and out all enemies at one and the same time all fourteen evils? Have you understood the value consequences of the Ten vargas (things) ¹ five ¹, four vargas², seven vargas³, eight vargas⁴, six vargas⁵ Have you mastered the three⁶ and

attention of the reader is invited here, this will give him of the administration of that time, also of its materiality.

ten vargas —(1) Hunting, (2) Gambling, (3) Sleeping in (4) Villifying, (5) Addiction to women, (6) to wine, dancing, (8) to singing, (9) to playing upon musical instruments, (10) And purposeless rambling

five kinds of fortresses —Jala Durga (water fort), Giri Durga (hill fort), Venu Durga (forest fort), Harin Durga (fortress full of deer (cattle) and Dhanwan Durga (fortress inaccessible by water)

four kinds of administrative policy by which to govern the state —(1) Equity (2) Liberality, (3) Difference (Divide and Rule) and (4) Punishment

seven indispensable factors of administration.—(1) Sovereign, (2) Ministers, (3) Polity, (4) Fortress, (5) Treasury, (6) Power, (7) Wealth.

agriculture, commerce, fortress bridges, capture of elephants, horses, revenue Some say eight kinds of manifestations of the King's power, frowning, etc

threefold interest (2) Desire and (3) Virtue.

the Vedas At first the Atharva Veda was not included in the list of the Vedas,

learnt the art of polity? Have you attained victory over the senses and over evils both superhuman and committed by men?

Have you attained six virtues? (a) Do you perform what is to be done by a king? (b) Do you pay attention to (c) twenty Vargas, to (d) Prikritis, to (e) Mandala (f) Jatra, (g) Punishment and (h) the two yonis—Peace and war?"

Don't you perform the rites enjoined by the Vedas? Don't you find them to fructify? Are all the wives barren? I hope your learning has not been in vain. Do you act in the manner I have just now spoken to

(a) Peace (2) War, (3) Marching and halting, (4) Sowing, (5) Dimensions, (6) and seeking protection.

(b) As to rescue the frightened from the cause of fear, to protect the honourable from insult, etc.

(c) Twenty classes of people with whom friendship or peace should not be contracted, viz :—Children; invalids old people one who has been excommunicated by his kinsmen cowards ferocious persons the greedy the irritable a man with too many advisers one with too many foes the unrighteous too much wordly persons one smitten by Providence slanderer of gods and Brahmins; almost a dead person etc.

(d) Prikritis were five in number :—Ministars, (2) Treasure, (3) Territory 4) Exactions, (5) Chastisement.

(e) Twelve classes of chiefs capable of declaring war, concluding peace and of observing neutrality

(f) Fivefold marching (Mandou va) of the army at the time of battle.

(g) Administration of criminal justice

(h) Yonis—sources—here the expression means peace and war.

These are conducive to longevity, fame, wealth and virtue. You are no doubt following the examples of forefathers. I presume, you do not alone enjoy dainties yourself, but distribute them among those who wish for them. Now, mark, my darling son, the chastiser of people, can enjoy the earth, and also attain heaven after death by justly punishing the people."

After giving such advices in the forms of questions Bharat, Ram asked, "Now tell me why have you gone to the forest leaving the kingdom wearing matted hair and deer skin? Tell me everything unreservedly, I am anxious to hear them."

CHAPTER XL

BHARAT'S REPLY

Bharat somehow subduing his grief said with joined

O Arya! Father after performing a terrible thing under the instigation of Kaikeyi has died of grief for his son. To speak the truth, this sinful act has been committed by mother, and instead of getting the kingdom he has obtained widowhood, and has been condemned to eternal perdition. O worshipful one, I am your son, be pleased with me and enjoy your kingdom. Indra—the King of Gods, People and widowed souldiers have come to you, please do them favour

You are the eldest and you are to be invested with the crown so according to custom and morality you should take back your kingdom and thus fulfil the desire of your friends and kinsmen. Let earth cease to be a widow by getting back you as her lord. With my counsellors I entreat you by your feet I am your brother pupil and servant be pleased with me. These ministers hold their offices from generation to generation according to the law of heredity they had never been slighted so it behoves you not to override their wishes."

Saying this Bharat fell at Ram's feet with tearful eyes.

Then Ram embracing Bharat said "How can a man true to his vows and born of a noble line, do a sinful act just for a kingdom? You are not to be blamed for my exile, and do not also blame your mother through ignorance. Superiors can act as they like in relation to their sons and wives sons and disciples should always be obedient. The king has enough authority either to send me to exile or to confer the kingdom on me. Mother is as worshipful as the father and when they have sent me to the forest how can I act otherwise? Go back to Ayodhya and rule the kingdom and I shall live here in the Dandaka forest. This is the wish of the King, now it is your duty to obey that you should go back and enjoy what has been assigned to you. What has been ordained by that Indra like noble lord is certainly for my good the kingdom does not appear covetable to me.

Bharat replied, "O noble one! I have already

and custom, then what do I care for
 ng ? It is an immemorial custom in our
 ounge should not ascend the throne in
 elder So come back with me to
 scend the throne for the benefit of our
 whose acts are righteous though people
 as a human being but to me he is a god
 Kekaya and you were in the forest,
 his mortal coil As soon as you set
 akshman from Ayodhya, father died of
 ow please get up and perform his last
 ready performed them You were the
 f father, may the things offered by you
 region of Pitriloka Alas ! The King
 your sight and he died of grief for your
 hearing these shocking words—terrible
 Ram fell prostrate stretching his arms
 like a flowery tree fallen down by an

her and Janakī finding Ram lying like
 gued with the sports of upturning the
 ks began to sprinkle water with tearful
 s consciousness ¹”

regained his consciousness He then
 ears and mournfully said to Bharat

speech of Ram seems to be an interpolation for as
 f the death, he fainted in grief and Sita too began
 This chapter has been omitted by Mr Griffith

"Father has gone to the heaven, what shall I do by returning to Ayodhya? Who will govern the city widowed by the death of the King? I am indeed born unfortunate I could not be of any service to my father I could not perform his funeral rites who gave up his life for me. Bharat! You Satrugna are fortunate you have performed the last rites of our father Even after the expiry of the period of exile I shall not return to lordless Ayodhya Father is dead who will now advise me as to what is right and what is wrong? From whom I shall now hear those sweet words of encouragement which I used to hear when succeeded in performing a thing successfully?"

Ram then approached fullmoon-like Sita with tearful eyes and addressing her said with a grief-stricken heart. O Sita! Your father in law is dead, O Lakshman! You have become fatherless. Brother Bharat has brought this cruel news!

On hearing of father in law's death Sita's eyes grew dim with tears and for that she could not see her beloved Ram. Ram after consoling Sita said to Lakshman

My boy! Bring me Ingudi fruits, and a new bark I shall now go to the Mandakini and perform the watery rites of my father. Let Sita proceed first, you go after her and I shall follow you. At the time of mourning this is how one should proceed according to the Shastras.¹

Then ever-servicable Sumantra took Ram by the

1 The order of procession was the youngest went first and the eldest last; and first children, then women and then men.

THE RAMAYAN

ak of the Mandakini consoling him all at and others also arrived there Ram south and taking water in the cavity of , said with tearful eyes, 'Father' You paired to heaven, may this clear water produce your satisfaction there"

with his brothers came to the margin of and placing the Pindas of Ingudi mixed fruits on a bed of grass, said with tears, t this Pinda and partake of it We are i the forest and we live upon such food, artakes he can offer it to the manes of his

ft the bank of the river and following the which he previously came he ascended the ing at the door of his cottage he took kshman by the two hands At that time heir father seemed to be renewed and they loud resounding the hill with their cries l roars of a lion At this Bharat's party thought that probably Bharat had met were now crying for their dead father towards the direction of the sound and t shook with their hurried steps

g at the cottage, the followers of Bharat am seated on the ground At that sight e filled with tears and started abusing anthara Ram stood up at their sight and m affectionately and they bowed to his en burst into loud lamentations, and every-

one considered Ram so recently exiled as his dear one for ever residing in a foreign land.

In the meantime Vasistha was coming along with the queens. The queen was slowly proceeding on foot along the bank of the river and on seeing a bank's descent (ghat) built for the use of Ram and Lakshman to get into the Mandakini stream Kausalya broke forth in tearful eyes pointing the same to Sumitra and other co-wives. Look Sumitra! this is the bank's descent of those unfortunate who have been deprived of their kingdom. Your son Lakshman unknown to laziness personally carries water for Ram along these flights. It is a menial work, but it does not degrade since he does it for his elder yet this toilsome work is unworthy of him."

Seeing the Ingudi Pindas on grass, Kausalya said Look! Ram has offered here Pindas to the noble lord of the Ikshwakulu. What a poor offering to the lord of the earth who used to enjoy all the dainties of the world? How will he feed upon Ingudi fruits? Nothing can be more painful than this. But I wonder why my heart was not rent into two at this painful sight?"

Other queens with great difficulty consoled Kausalya but when they saw Ram in the forest like an angel dropped from the heaven, they broke forth in loud sobs.

Ram immediately stood up at their sight and bowed to their feet. They then with their soft palms began to brush off the dusts from his back. Lakshman then greeted them with a sorrowful heart. They treated Lakshman as they had done with Ram. At last Janaki grown lean with the hardships of forest-life,

feet of her mothers-in-law, stood silent
 eyes At that sight Kausalya burst into
 racing her as her own daughter exclaimed

How is she, who is the daughter of the
 king, daughter-in-law of king Dasarath, and
 bearing these hardships in the forest? My
 the sight of your face which now looks
 as pale as lily, like a crushed lotus, like gold
 dusts and like the moon hidden in
 clouds, colds my heart as fire burns a log of

He bowed to fire-like-effulgent Vasistha,
 to Vrihaspati, and sat down after the
 king's seat. After this Bharat, his ministers
 and priests sat behind them with folded palms,
 burnt with curiosity to hear what would
 come to Ram

Time, however, passed in their lamentations
 and grief, and when the day dawned they went
 to the forest, performed their morning
 rituals (Homa and recitation of the Sabitri
 and after that they silently came back to

CHAPTER XLI

THE PERSUASIONS

Bharat then addressing Ram, said before all,

My Lord ! The kingdom by bestowing which on me father wanted to pacify my mother I do now make over to your hands. Enjoy the kingdom free from all thorns. Who excepting you can now protect the kingdom torn asunder like a dam breached by strong currents of water during the rains ? As the mule can currents of water during the rains ? As the mule can not imitate a horse, or a common fowl the king of birds so you should know me (to be the same) in comparison with you. Happy is the man upon whom depend others for their sustenance but unhappy is he who depends on others for his own support. Let all people witness you duly established on the throne. Every one praised Bharat for his noble words.

Then gentle Ram replied, "My boy ! A created being does not enjoy any independent existence, he has no freedom of will, he can't act as he likes, he is subject to death. Everything is perishable, every rise has its fall where there is composition there is decomposition there is life as well as death.¹ As a ripe fruit has on other course² but to fall as an edifice standing

1 In the original Death draws him both here and after

2 When literally translated it stands thus as a ripe fruit has no other fear than fall, so a man who is born has no other fear than death !

pillars grows weak when dilapidated with
grows feeble and the night that hath passed
turn back, as the stream of the Jamuna
Is the ocean does not recede in its course.

Heat continually dries up the water of
r-fleeting days and nights rob people of
y Whether you be stationery in one
t about hither and thither, your life must
nd So think about yourself and don't
others Death accompanies you in your
wn when you sit, he travels long distance
d returns with thee With age a man
is skin is wrinkled and his hair turns grey
e how can you prevent these? Man
he rise of the sun and he feels delighted
ch of night, but he does not understand
by this time has been shortened People
at the advent of a new season, but they
stand that with the revolution of seasons
ty has been shortened As in the vast
ce of wood comes in contact with another
e of the current, i e., by mere accident)
comes separated so you should understand
iation with wealth, wife and children It
to get rid of this eternal chain of birth and
who laments for another's death cannot,
vent his own "

traveller follows another seeing him going
m so we shall have to follow our prede-
y should then a man mourn for another

when he cannot alter his own inevitable end ? Seeing life ebbing fast like the flow of a stream which cannot be called back, man should engage himself in search of happiness since happiness is the end of all. Our virtuous father after performing many meritorious sacrifices has repaired to heaven. It is not proper to mourn for him. He has attained heavenly bliss by casting off his infirm body so we must no more weep for him. In all circumstances intelligent people subdue grief lamentations and tears, so be not overwhelmed with grief go back to Ayodhya and reside in the capital. This was the wish of our father and let me pursue my own duties here. He was our father and it is not proper to disobey his commands. You ought to honour him. It is our duty to obey our superiors who wish for our ultimate good. Father has attained heaven by his own merits you may rest assured. Now attend to your own duties.

Thus saying Ram lapsed into silence.

Then Bharat returned,— My noble lord who is like you in this world ? Sorrow cannot afflict you nor pleasure can buoy you up. You are an ideal to the aged people, though you consult them in times of doubt. To you life and death, good and evil are all equal. You have nothing to grieve for. In fact one who has acquired self knowledge like you is not moved by any calamity or sorrow. You are truthful wise and divine in nature the mysteries of life and death are not unknown to you, so even intense sorrow cannot overpower you "

mean-minded mother has done in my
 ant land had not the least approval of
 th me It is for religious consideration
 ot as yet taken the life of this sinful
 would I commit such a nefarious act
 illustrious Dasarath? King Dasarath
 ing and preceptor so I should not speak
 m, but was this right (being cognizant
 it and what is wrong) to act in this
 instigation of his wife? It is said that
 d is near, his sense becomes perverted.
 luct of the King this adage seems to be
 t, now rectify the wrong that has been
 er through anger, ignorance or wreck-
 on is called "Aptaya" because he saves
 fall, so be thou a true son "

becoming of you to perpetuate the wrong.

What he has done is most unjust and
 nsible So be gracious to comply with
 How ill-matched is Kshatriya valour
 e, and matted locks with sovereignty?
 is! It is not at all becoming of you to
 perverse line of action Governing the
 duty of a Kshatriya, but which Kshatriya
 ide this Kshatriya morality will adopt a
 an arduous course restored to by old
 if you are inclined to arduous duties then
 ous duty of governing the four orders
 rding to custom and morality Virtuous

people say that of the four orders¹ the life of a householder is the best, then why do you intend to abandon that? My lord! In attainments and in age I am a boy to you. Who can govern in your presence? I even lack in common sense. I cannot live without your help so you rule over the earth. Vasistha and other Ritwigas versed in Mantras with the subjects will present you the crown even here. After the coronation ceremony go back to Ayodhya like Indra the ruler of heaven. Absolve yourself from the threefold debts, viz., to the gods, to the ancestors and to the Rishis heighten the miseries of your enemies and increase the pleasure of your friends, and rule over me. Rescue our revered father Dasarath from sin by removing the disgrace of my mother Kaikeyi. I throw myself at thy feet and entreat you again and again and do me this favour. If you retire to another forest without granting my prayers, I tell you that I shall go along with you."

Bharat bowed down and thus entreated, but Ram did not acquiesce in his words. he was determined to carry out the mandate of his father. So he was both pleased and pained by Bharat's entreaties. Then all

1 Four orders of life according to the old Hindus were :—

Brahmacharya (celibacy) Garhasthya (householder), Vana-prastha (retiring to the forest by eschewing worldly life) (Bhikshu mendicancy), Manu says, the life of a householder is the best for he can attain the merits of other orders by discharging faithfully the household duties as all creatures depend on air so all other orders are subordinate to Garhasthya order

at for his noble speech, and they all
 n again and again
 returned, "Bharat ! You are born of King
 l what you have proposed is worthy of
 her at the time of marrying your mother
 the king of Kekaya that he would bestow
 upon the son born of that marriage
 omised your mother two boons being
 her nursing at the time of the war between
 the Asuras , therefore your mother asked
 ons, my exile and your installation to the
 ave come to the forest with Janakī and
 o redeem father from his pledge, so you
 uthout further delay accept the kingdom
 e of truth Even for my satisfaction you
 m father from his obligation and should
 other Here me, my boy ! In Gaya high-
 at the time of sacrifice to please his depart-
 recited this vedic hymn
 saves his father from the hell named Put
 a, and he who saves¹ his father from all
 ulties is also a Putra (or a true son) The
 ay for many sons because at least one of
 to Gaya (to offer pindas)' Bharat ! Such
 ef of the former kings So go back to
 get yourself installed and rule over the
 eir welfare with the help of Satrugna
 nanas I shall shortly repair with Janakī

it verb 'treyati' means to save , Put (hell) and

to the Dandaka forest. You rule over men let me rule over the animals here. Go back with a contented mind and I shall too set forth to the Dandaka with delight. Let white umbrella shade your head. I shall take refuge under the cooler shadow of these forest trees. As Lakshman to me Satrugna will be of great help to you. Thus let us fulfil the vow of our father."

Then sage Javali observed, "Ram! You are intelligent and wise but not your intelligence lead you to discomfitures like that of an ordinary person. Now mark who is whose friend? Who is entitled to a thing by virtue of his relation? Man is born alone and dies alone. He is an insane person who becomes affectionately attached to another as his father or mother. As at the time of setting out for a foreign land a man resides outside his village, and on the next morning he leaves it (without remorse) you should know such is a man's relation with his father mother house and wealth. Good people never become attached to these. Therefore, it is not becoming of you to renounce the ancestral kingdom at the request of your father and to live in this dense forest full of perils. Go back to prosperous Ayodhya, and the city is waiting for you like a woman wearing a single braid of hair¹. You will pass your days happily like Indra the ruler of Gods. Dasarath was nobody to you, so you were none to him

1 The custom was that a woman separated from her husband or lover discarded all her toilets and used to wait for the union with her uncombed hair woven into a single braid.

than your father. You are also other than you act as I tell you to do. Father is regarded as the instrumental cause of birth, in fact, the germ which mother holds in her womb during her true cause of generation. Now, King Dasaratha to a place where every man is bound to go by his nature—but you are spoiling everything by selfishness (perverse intellect). I am really sorry for those who, disregarding all tangible duties that lie within the province of perception and live with (unsubstantial) virtue alone, they bring various miseries here on earth are, at last, ended by death. You find people to perform a *pinda* in honour of their dead ancestors, but it is only sheer waste of rice, for who has ever seen a dead man can eat? If food taken by one man in another's body, then feed one on behalf of a man living in a distant country. But does this man living in a distant land as his food feel gratified by it? Certainly not. The rules about worship of Gods, sacrifice, gifts and duties have been laid down in the *Shastras* by clever men to rule over people and to make them obedient and disposed to charity. Therefore, O Ram! Beware of yourself with this idea that there is no need, nor any religious practice for attaining *Moksha*. Now what is within your experience and do not go yourself with what lies beyond the province of experience. Bharata is entreating you, take a wise view of the thing approved by all, and establish a monarchy."

But this speech of Javali failed to produce any change in Ram's mind and he observing rules of piety returned

O Sage ! What you have just now said for my interest though appears like a desirable course of action is indeed not so (it looks like duty but it is not) He who is vicious and walks along a wrong path and preaches against the doctrines of the Shastras is not honoured by good people. One's conduct shows whether one is high born or low-born whether he is valiant or vain pure or impure. If I act according to your advice various mischiefs will ensue. Your view is most unliberal. Acting according to your precept a mean-charactered fellow may appear as honourable the vicious may appear as pure, and the insuspicious may look like suspicious. I shall be condemned by the virtuous and shall be guilty of violating the family custom if I adopt this reprehensible course of action as my duty. I can not then hope to attain the blissful state (after death) for the fulfilment of a vow and the subjects following my example will go on astray. So what you have said does not appear to be commendable to me.

"The immemorial royal polity where kindness plays a prominent part, is based upon truth. Wonderful is the potentiality of truth, all the world is being held by it. Gods and Saints honour truth greatly truthful people attain Brahmaloaka love of truth is at the root of all religions. Truth is God and religion is based upon it, nay everything rests on truth. There is nothing greater than truth. The Vedas, enjoining Sacrifice Charity Homa and Penance are founded upon truth. The earth

putation and fame crave for him who is from all considerations it is desirable to be shall renounce that so called religion, or morality, that is followed by the low, mean and greedy people One may commit of sins either by his body, or by his mind, each One man maintains his family, another hell, and another is honoured by the gods My father was devoted to truth Why obey that which he laid upon me, being truth To him I am bound by truth and I reach the bridge of truth through ignorance, anger or pride I have heard that Gods do not accept any offerings of man This devotion of truth is the highest of all faiths, noble men have always borne therefore, I have become anxious to follow that you have explained to me with your ears to be quite hateful to me How can Bharat's proposal after accepting my decree of vowing before my father? Kaikeyi was grieved when I bound myself by truth, how can I ease her? I shall henceforth pass my days in a chaste and pure life by subsisting on fruits to the satisfaction of the Gods and ancestors In this field of action one should do what is not what is only desirable Agni, Vayu have attained their lofty positions by their various acts Indra the king of Gods, have his heavenly kingdom by the performance

of hundred sacrifices this is why he is called Satakratu."

"O Sage! Truth, religion, penance, charity, speech, worship of gods, hospitality towards the guests are the ways that lead to heaven. The Brahmins have assigned them to be means of salvation. Your words are quite antagonistic to the Vedas and religion and father was to be blamed for appointing you as a priest. As a Buddhist¹ is punishable like a thief so an atheist deserves to be punished and an atheist is to be shunned as condemned by the Vedas and wise people should not talk with him. Better Brahmins than you practice this religion and perform sacrifices, penances and other rites. In fact those who are religious, generous, and affectionate are honoured in this world."

When Ram said thus with some contempt Javali humbly replied "Ram! I am neither an atheist nor am I an advocate of atheism and it is not true that there is no after world after death. I become a believer or an atheist as occasions demand. Time has come when one should grow an atheist and I have said all these just to induce you to leave the forest but now I withdraw my words for your satisfaction."

Then saintly Vasistha seeing Ram somewhat irritated said "My boy Javali is quite conversant with the final departure of human beings to the other world and their rebirth. He has said these just to persuade you

1 It is clear it is an interpolation. The original Ramayan was certainly compiled long before rise of Buddha.

to Ayodhya Ram, you are the descendant of asaratha, it is your duty to ascend the throne over the kingdom. It is the custom amongst the sages that the eldest should ascend the throne, it is not proper for you to violate that time-honoured custom, so you rule the earth like your father asaratha."

boy! Three persons are adorable on earth: the father, the mother and the preceptor. Ram, I am your mother as well as of your father, and you will attain all merits by obeying my words, and also by the protection of your friends, relations, people and the ruler of the earth. It does not behove thee to disregard the wishes of your aged mother—pious Kausalya, nor the repeated requests of virtuous Bharat for thy return."

On hearing these words of Vasistha, replied, "Father and mother do their utmost to feed their children, to keep them healthy and clean, they give them toys to play and always use sweet speeches to them. Their debts can never be repaid. So I must not disobey the words of my procreator, father."

Bharat looked greatly depressed and said, "I shall spread Kusha grass on the ground, I shall lie down so long as Ram is not pleased. As a Brahmin sits at the door of his debtor for the recovery of his money¹ so I shall lie down before this cottage

admitting ingress into and egress from the house something like a Kabuli Zulum

covering myself from head to foot, and shall abstain from all food."

Sumantra, though ordered looked at Ram's face. Thereupon Bharat himself spread kusha on the ground and lay down on it.

Then Ram said "What have I done that you will starve yourself to death? This is a custom prevalent amongst the Brahmans but not amongst the Kshatriyas. So rise up and give up this arduous vow."

"Bharat then looked round and addressing the citizens said "Why are you not saying anything to Ram?"

They replied, "What you have said is in no way unjust and the earnestness which magnanimous Ram is showing for carrying out the wishes of his father appears to be equally just. This is why we have so long remained silent."

Then Ram said, "Bharat, you have heard what these good friends have just now said. Judge yourself their words. Just rise up touch my body and then take water."

Bharat then rose from the ground and addressing the courtiers said "Gentlemen hear me, and listen to me, my counsellors! I do not crave for this kingdom nor have I instigated mother for it, nor did I know that Ram would have to take shelter in the woods. If it is decided by him to live here in obedience to father's mandate then I shall live fourteen years in the forest as his substitute."

Ram was greatly astonished at Bharat's words then addressing the citizens and villagers said "You see,

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nor Bharat should annul any gift, sale, or effected by our father during his life-time e highly disreputable on my part to appoint e of mine to live in the forest Nothing been done by Kaikeyi, nor father has done

I know Bharat, he is full of forgiveness full of respect towards the superiors On from the forest, I shall share the kingdom Brother Bharat ! I have acted as mother s asked, do thou now absolve father from the of his promise "

Ram and Bharat were thus talking, heavenly Saints and Gandharvas appeared on the scene , and both the brothers most lavishly and said, blessed who has two righteous sons like you been greatly delighted by your words " Then about the destruction of Ravana they Bharat, saying, "O hero ! you are born of nily, and you are wise and famous If you care eputation of your father then agree to what said We also wish that he should be from his obligations by carrying out his

ying they went to their respective abodes

once more entreated Ram saying, "O, Arya ! desire of Kausalya It won't be possible for this vast kingdom, or to please the subjects ultivator anxiously waits for the rain, so all le are eagerly waiting for you Therefore

accept the kingdom and then give it up to whomever you please."

Saying this, lotus-eyed Bharat, dark as a cloud, threw himself at the feet of Ram and entreated him again and again.

Ram took up Bharat in his lap and said in a sweet voice like that of a singing swan My boy ! You have attained that state of mind which is only natural and which is the fruit of education and culture. Now do your duty with the help of wise counsellors and friends. The moon may lose its beauty the Himalayas its snow the ocean may overstep the limits of the coast, but I shall never refrain from fulfilling the promise of my father My darling ! Don't mind what your mother has done either for her love for you or from covetousness. You should honour and respect your mother as one ought to

Hearing these words of Ram, resplendent with energy like the sun and beautiful like the moon of the second lunar day of the month ¹ Bharat said O Arya ! Now take off from your feet those sandals wrought in gold these shall protect what the people possess and procure them what they want.

Then Ram took off the sandals and offered them to Bharat, Bharat took them with a profound bow and said, I shall dedicate the kingdom to these sandals and for fourteen years I shall wait in expectation of you by wearing bark and subsisting upon fruits and

1 First day after the New moon.

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shall live in the outskirts of the city with
but if I do not find you on the first day
fifth year, then I shall surely cast myself

eed to Bharat's words, and embracing
affection said, "Myself and Janaki conjure
ect mother Kausalya Never be rude to

his Ram with fearful eyes looked at

arat placing those bright sandals on the
elephant, went round Ram Then Ram
the Himalayas in piety, after paying his
asistha, took leave of Bharat, Satrughna,
and the people in succession At that time
of Ram's mothers were choked with tears.
r paying homage to them with sobs entered

CHAPTER XLII

BHARAT'S RETURN

arat carrying Ram's sandals on his head,
chariot with Satrughna and set out with
t, Vamadeva and Javali
vering a long distance they arrived at the
of Bharadwaj and on being questioned,
how even after repeated Ram refused to
kingdom and that he was taking with him

the glittering sandals of Ram to install them on the throne

Bharadwaj was mightily pleased at this news and said that death could not annihilate Dasarath since he had left such a virtuous son like him. Bharat then proceeded towards Ayodhya with his host. He crossed the rippling Jamuna and the Ganges and passed through Srngaverapur and then entered Ayodhya resounding the streets by the deep rumbling noise of his chariot, but was pained by the deserted look of the city which appeared gloomy like a moonless night. It looked like the planet Rohini bright with the lustre of the moon (?) when she is forlorn on account of her lover being afflicted with Rahu (the enemy of the moon). The busy hum of the city was hushed and it looked like a solitary diya after the sacrifice was over and it looked as if a star fell from the heaven on the extinction of its light or like a flowery creeper with mad bees humming over it but scorched by a sudden forest fire. The shops and stalls were closed the streets were deserted and were full of dirt. On the whole it presented a wretched view like an uncovered and unclean drinking place with all the wine drained and strewn with broken vessels.

Bharat then addressing Sumantra broke forth in grief. "Sumantra! Why that music is not heard in Ayodhya as was heard before? Why there is intoxicating smell of liquor fragrance of garlands and sweet incense of Aguru and Sandal? Why there is no deep rumbling noise of traffic in the city? Its former gay

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is over In fact, the splendour of Ayodhya
e city along with Ram It has no beauty
n shall Ram come back like a grand carnival
the summer, and will gladden the hearts of

hen keeping his mothers in Ayodhya said to
id others, "I shall go to Nandigram and I
all there, I shall suffer there the pangs of
om my brother. Father has gone to heaven
ful brother is in the forest, nothing is more
n this Now just for the kingdom I shall be
Ram, for Ram is the real king

sistha and others observed, "What you have
brotherly love is really commendable, and
ny of you You are honest and bear great
ur brother Who will not approve of your

hen asked the charioteer to yoke horses to
and after greeting his mothers he got upon
h Satrugna, and proceeded to Nandigram
llors and priests Even the citizens though
or asked began to follow, Bharat then
ndigram carrying the sandals on his head
sing the priests, Bharat said, "Worshipful
bestowed the kingdom on me as a trust
als inlaid with gold will govern the

ter, bowing to the sandals turning to the
said, "Speedily hold the royal umbiella over
representative of Ram Ram has consigned

the kingdom as a trust to me so I shall have to protect it till his return. When he will come back I shall myself with my own hands put on these sandals to Ram's feet and after reconveying everything to him I shall pass my days in his service and then be absolved from sin.

Thus saying Bharat with matted locks installed the sandals on the throne and out of deep respect himself stood by it by holding the umbrella and chowri in hands. Bharat then carried on the government as its subordinate and whenever anything was brought he first formally presented it to the sandals and then it was kept in deposit in the treasury.

CHAPTER XLIII

LEAVING THE CHITRAKUTA.

While living in the Chitrakuta one day found Sita greatly agitated. Ram grew anxious on this and with great humiliation he asked 'O venerable one ! Have you found me in deviating from the practices of former times that might cause disturbance to your peace as Lakshman committed any wrong through ignorance ? Is not Janaki devoted to your service ? Has she neglected her duty for her attachment towards me ?'

An aged ascetic said that there was no fault on the part of Sita or of anybody, but of late a demon, a formidable rover of night—was creating disturbances and thereby interrupting their religious observances and penances for which the hermits were themselves ready to go to the beautiful hermitage of Sage Kanwa and asked Ram to accompany him. He liked and repeatedly requested Ram to leave the place.

But this Ram had little inclination to live in that place for various reasons. At that place the memories of his dear ones, brothers and relatives began to haunt him. Besides the place was rendered dirty by the presence of his hosts. Ram then decided to leave the place and left for the hermitage of saint Atri with Lakshman.

Sage Atri received Ram Lakshman and Janaki with warm hospitality. The famous sage then called his virtuous wife Anusuya, devoted to penance, and asked her to receive Sita, and turning to Ram said,

My boy ! when people were suffering immensely from ten years drought this pious Anusuya created fruits and roots and even caused the Ganges to flow in the Asylum by her psychic power. She passed ten thousand years in penance. Once sage Mandavya cursed the wife of a monk saying that she would turn a widow as soon as the night would be over but this devout lady rendered one night long as ten nights by her psychic power. She is gentle and pure. Let Janaki go to her.

Ram then turned to Sita and said "Princess ! you have heard what the sage has said and have to go to that pious lady for your benefit."

Thereupon Sita went to Anusuya. She was all hoary with age and was trembling like a plantain tree in the breeze. Janaki mentioned her name and after bowing at her feet she enquired about her welfare in joined hands.

Seeing Janaki, Anusuya remarked "Janaki ! you know what is righteousness, therefore by forsaking your relations, wealth and vanities you have followed Ram in exile. She who loves her husband whether living in the city or in the forest, whether he be attached to her or ill-disposed towards her attains great spiritual bliss. Whether the husband be a libertine or wayward or be indigent, he is always adorable to a noble

wife I do not know of a more constant husband, like the merits acquired by those who crave for their husbands only re harlots (in their hearts) and they are judging merits and demerits of such acts. A wicked woman like that is apt to fall into deep infamy. But those who are good and as you are adored in heaven. So you should love your husband in everything."

She gently replied, "There is nothing strange I will teach me thus. O worshipful lady! I know that husband is always an object of respect. The wife should unhesitatingly devote herself to his services even if the husband be of bad character. But what shall I say in his case, who is self-accomplished, steadfast, constant, just, and kind to his parents? Ram loves and honours his wife like Kausalya. Ram looks upon her as one on whom Dasarath ever cast his glance. I have not forgotten the advices imparted to me by Kausalya on the eve of my coming to this world, nor I have forgotten what mother asked me at the time of marriage in the presence of all. In fact, my friends and relations have imprinted on my heart that devotion to the husband is the best virtue of a wife. Savitri is adored in heaven for this devotion, and you too have attained heaven by this devotion. Rohini, the foremost of stars, never for a moment appears in the sky without the moon. In fact, many chaste and

devoted women have attained heaven by their virtues.

Anusuya was greatly delighted at Sita's speech and kissing her head the venerable lady said, My Darling by my penance I have acquired great powers, I want to grant you some boons. Now tell me what will please you? Tell me your desire."

Sita was greatly astonished at this and replied with a sweet smile. "Lady! I am more than thankful that you have been pleased with me (for your kindness towards me) Anusuya was still more pleased with these words of Sita and said My daughter I have been exceedingly delighted at your words. I shall now attain a desire of mine. Take this beautiful garland apparel, these ornaments, and cosmetics. With these you will appear exceedingly beautiful in person. These are worthy of you and they will be never tarnished by use. Janaki! by daubing your body with this paint you will enhance the beauty of Ram sitting by his side, as goddess Kamala graces Narayan by her presence."

Then Sita after accepting those affectionate presents sat by her side. Then the ascetic woman asked "My daughter I have heard that Ram got you as wife in Swayamvara now tell me everything about it." Then Janaki replied, "O worshipful lady hear me then. There reigns a virtuous king named Janaka in Mithila. He found me one day while ploughing the field. He was then levelling the ground for sacrifice. I was found lying on the ground covered with mud. He was greatly astonished finding me in that situation. As he had no issue of his own, he affectionately took me in his lap

oment a voice from above said, 'O king, from
e will truly be a daughter unto you' King
greatly delighted at this, and from that time
prosper"

en placed me in the hands of her queen
r a child, and she brought me up with
affection In course of time I gained my
le age My father grew anxious and felt
like a poor man who has lost his money
ie father of the girl be an influential person
ie had to suffer many indignities at the hands
s and inferiors' When he failed to procure
bridegroom for me, he thought of holding a
ta Formerly, God Varuna had given to
Devarata, a formidable bow with excellent
arrows The bow was a heavy one which
could not raise or bend, and my truthful
mised to confer me on him who would be
t stringe to the bow Thus passed many a

sage Visvamitra came to witness father's
Mithila with Ram and Lakshman in his
whereupon Ram wished to see the bow and
within the twinkle of an eye, nay he broke
! Then my truthful father was about to
on Ram by holding up a vessel of water¹
Ram did not agree to marry without his
isent Father then brought my father-in-

g of water with Mantras is necessary in every solemn

law king Dasarath, from Ayodhya and bestowed me on Ram. I have got a beautiful sister named Urmilla she has been married to Lakshman. Since then I am devoted to my husband."

Having heard this the pious wife of Attri kissed Sita's head and said "I am glad to hear all these. Now the sun is on the decline. The birds are returning to their nests after a day's quest for food chirping sweet notes in their flight. The monks after evening bath are returning in wet barks with pitchers of water on their shoulders. Look! Columns of smoke—reddish like the hue of a pigeon's neck—are rising from the sacrificial fire. Trees of thin foliage appear dense in darkness. The hermitage deer are reposing on the dais. Animals that rove in night are going about to and fro. Nothing is visible at distance. The night is come. The moon has ascended the sky clothed in light. The stars have become visible. Janaki! Now I permit you to go and minister to your husband. You have gratified me by your sweet speech now oblige me by putting on these ornaments."

Then Sita—beautiful like the daughter of a god—adorned her person with those ornaments and went to Ram after bowing at the venerable lady's feet. Ram was delighted at the sight of these affectionate presents and Lakshman too was immensely pleased at this warm hospitality.

Ram passed the night in the hermitage of Attri. In the morning after bath he asked the monks about

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go to another forest. The ascetics finding Lakshman about to start said, "Prince ! That forest abounds in ferocious animals and Rakshasas. These Rakshasas are cannibals feed upon the flesh of the ascetics Do you fear them ? This is the path through which the forest fruits You will be able to enter into the forest through this route "

After being warned by the ascetics, and after receiving blessings from them, Ram entered the forest with Lakshman and Janaki, as the sun enters behind heavy clouds

THE END OF AYODHYA KANDAM

ARANYA KANDAM

THE RAMAYAN

ARANYA KANDAM

CHAPTER I

DESTRUCTION OF VIRADII

On entering the mighty forest of Dandaka Ram saw hermitages of ascetics as if surrounded by a halo of spiritual glory where lived old hermits subsisting on fruits and roots, clad in barks, and versed in the Vedas. The whole place was strewn over with kusha grass and floral offerings of worship. At some places articles of worship were kept, while at others Homa sacrifices were going on and there arose a continual chant of the Vedic hymns. It abounded in sweet fruit bearing tree and there were tanks full of full blown lotuses. Ram entered the sanctuary by unstringing his bow.

The hermits seeing Ram beautiful like the newly-risen moon accompanied by Lakshman and Janaki greeted him with sweet words. They were struck with wonder by the beauty and grace of Ram and also at the sight of his elegant dress, and they stared at him with steadfast eyes.

They then asked Ram to take his seat inside a cottage where they received him with due rites of

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offering fruits, flowers, roots and water, and
sing Ram they said in a body

You are honourable and the defender of
you are our supreme lord, and the protector
pay homage to the king and one-fourth
me who rules justly, and for this he is
enjoy all good things. You are our king
u reside in the forest or in the city It is
to protect us We have subdued our
do not chastise anybody, so like a child in
, womb, we are worthy of your protection.”
his, the hermits offered Ram various fruits
, and they tried to please Ram in various

following day, at sunrise, Ram entered the
Lakshman and Janaki and found the place
n various kinds of wild animals Tigers
were roving about freely and shrubs and
re torn by their movements, and tanks and
red muddy, and there was a continual
e of beetles

ving there Ram found a terrible Rakshasa,
mountain peak, with wide mouth, sunken
protruding belly. The monster was clad
ained tiger-skin and was roaring dreadfully
his wide mouth, terrible like the jaws of
piercing with his iron spike three lions, two
ur tigers, ten deer and the head of a huge
ving fat

That cannibal rushed at Ram Lakshman and Janaki the moment he saw them, like the God of Death and shook the earth by his terrible yells, and after snatching away Sita he shouted from some distance "Who are you puny creatures? Why have you entered the Dandaka forest with a woman? You have matted your locks, put on barks, and carry bows in your hands! You look like ascetics but why do you two live with one woman? Why have you assumed the garb of a monk and act otherwise? This beautiful woman will henceforth be my wife. I am a Rakshasa and my name is Viradb. I constantly feed upon the flesh of the hermits and rove about freely in the forest. Now I shall drink your blood.

Sita was greatly frightened by these words and she began to tremble like a plantain leaf. Then Ram with a distressful heart addressing Lakshman said

Look, the daughter of king Janaka and my wife is in the lap of the monster. The desire of step-mother Kaikeyi has to-day been fulfilled. To tell you the truth I have been more distressed to-day at the sight of Sita being touched by another than by the loss of kingdom or by father's death.

Then Lakshman in rage and sorrow replied "Arya! You are the lord of all and I am your servant then why do you lament like a helpless man? I shall kill this monster with a single shaft and the earth will drink its gore. I shall hurl the full brunt of my rage against that brute and he will fall prostrate on the ground."

The Rakshasa then cried out resounding the forest

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sh grating voice, "Tell me who are you and ou go?"

answered, "We are Kshatriyas, born of the ie, and are of pure character and have come st for some reason. We are also eager to ou are."

said, "I am son of Yava, my mother is and my name is Viradh. Having gratified my penance and devotion I have got a boon that none will be able to destroy me by any low give up the hope of this woman and run this place or I shall kill you immediately."

w angry at this and said, "Ah, thou wretched. You are surely seeking your death." Saying once discharged seven sharp arrows flaming rom his bow, which struck the monster and his blood. Viradh then let off Sita, rushed am brandishing a terrific lance, gaping wide.

Ram and Lakshman began to shower les on him. Ram cut off the lance with two m and Lakshman then attacked him with swords, dreadful as black snakes. But Viradh ld of them and proceeded towards the forest em by force.

at sight, Janaki raised her hands and broke orrow, "The terrible monster is taking away am and Lakshman. Let tigers devour me ow down to you, Oh, Rakshasa chief! Please and take me instead."

At these words of Janaki Ram and Lakshman resolved to kill Viradh without further delay and Lakshman broke Viradh's left arm and Ram his right, and Viradh fainted in agony. Ram and Lakshman then showered kicks and blows upon the prostrate body. Yet the monster did not expire. Finding the Rakshasa thus invulnerable to weapons Ram proposed to bury him alive and asked Lakshman to dig a spacious ditch for the same and he planted his foot upon the neck of the prostrate monster.

Hearing those words of Ram, Viradh began to speak. O lion amongst men! I am about to die through ignorance I could not recognise you first that you are Kausalya's son Ram, he is Lakshman and she is worshipful Janaki. I have got this terrible form of a Rakshasa through a curse. My name is Tamvaru and I am a Gandharva. I once offended Kuvera, the lord of the Yakshas by my absence, on account of my attachment for Rambha, and he then punished me with a curse. Softened by my entreaties, Kuvera at last blessed me saying that when king Dasaratha's son Ram would slay me in battle I would get back my former state of a Yaksha. My lord! Through your grace I have been absolved from that terrible curse and I shall now be able to repair to him. Half a yojana from this place there lives a pious hermit effulgent like the sun named Sharabhang. Soon go to him, he will do you good. My end is near. Throw me into a ditch. It is

orial custom for dead Rakshasas to be buried ¹
 " we attain salvation "
 an then dug out a spacious ditch and threw
 r into it

CHAPTER II

SAGE SHARABHANGA

he destruction of Viradh, Ram and Laksh-
 red towards the hermitage of Sharabhanga
 iving at the hermitage they saw a wonderful
 here, they found Indra, the king of gods,
 heavenly jewels and clad in elegant robes,
 a bright effulgence from his person, and wor-
 oy many gods who had accompanied him He
 ding there yet his feet did not touch the
 His chariot was stationed in the sky, yoked
 ow-coloured steeds and at a short distance
 royal umbrella beautiful as the moon, white
 cy clouds and decked with variegated wreaths
 iful women were fanning him with chowris
 two sides, and gods and saints were singing his
 as then talking to Sharabhanga . and Ram
 n to be Indra, addressed Lakshman as follows

apparently refers to the custom of burying the dead instead
 them, more antique in origin Vide Rigveda and also
 Lal Mitter's works

"Look ! What a wonderful chariot ! How bright and beautiful ! It shines like the blazing sun in the sky ! Those horses surely belong to the king of gods of which we have heard previously. Those young men with broad chests wearing ear rings and holding swords in their hands appear like tigers quite unapproachable for their might. They have put on red clothes and jewel-necklaces like wreaths of flames and they appear to be of twenty five years of age, this is the permanent age of the celestial youths. You wait with Janaki till I ascertain who is that effulgent person in the car.

Saying this Ram proceeded towards the hermitage of Sharabhanga.

Then Indra seeing Ram coming in that direction said to the gods, "Behold ! Ram is coming hither. Let us leave this place before he greets us, so he will miss us. I shall appear before him after he conquers the great difficulties and dangers that lie before him. He will have to achieve a great thing, incapable of being performed by others."

Saying this Indra disappeared with the gods after paying homage to Sharabhanga and inviting him to the heavenly region.

Then Ram entered the hermitage with his brother and wife. At that time, the sage Sharabhanga was seated in the chamber of fire-worship. The sage received them with due hospitality and assigned a separate place for them.

Ram then asked "Tell me, O sage ! Why the king of gods did pay this visit to the ashrama ?

nga replied, "My boy ! I have secured by severe penance and meditation, Indra te me to that region. But I did not go ng that a dear and worthy guest like you my hermitage. You are pious, and I have gratified by your presence. I shall now ihmaloka. I have attained different regions ous merits and I wish you would accept

m, versed in the Shastras, replied, "O, sage ! tain blissful region by my own virtue. Now re shall I take shelter in this forest ?"

narabhangha said, "My boy ! There lives a nt named Sutikshna. He will do you good distance flows the Mandakini through a e, proceed in its opposite direction and you ach the hermitage. Now I have indicated to y, just wait for a moment, I shall cast off body in your presence, as a snake casts off

this, Sharabhangha prepared a fire and after lations with Mantras he entered into it. The ce reduced his skin, flesh, bones and hairs

Then Sharabhangha assuming a youthful, dy emerged from the fire. Thereafter pass- gions of the saints and the gods, he reached and appeared before Brahma, the grandsire ited beings, who was greatly pleased at his

he ascension of Sharabhangha to heaven, great

sages as Vaikhanasas, Valakhilya Sauprakhala Marichupa Ashmakuta Patrahar Dantalukhola Unmajjaka Gatrasyya Asyya Anavakashika Salilahar Vayabhuksha,¹ Akashanilaya Sthandilashayi Adrapatarasha and others appeared before Ram. These saints are devoted to meditation and are surrounded by a halo of spiritual shine.

They said to Ram: As Indra amongst the Gods so are you the supreme lord of the Ikshwaku race and of the world at large. You have become famous in the three worlds for your valour and virtue. Full and perfect religion has fixed its permanent abode in you. You will forgive us for what we say as suitors to you: A king who receives one sixth of the people's income but does not protect his subjects incurs great sin while, on the other hand, he who governs his people like his sons reaps great fame on earth and attains *Brahmaloka* after death. The king is entitled even to the one fourth of the religious merit that is acquired by saints and hermits living on fruits and roots. Ram! You are the lord of this forest abounding in Brahmins, many of whom are losing their lives in the hands of the Rakshasas. Come and see their dead bodies. They are tyrannising over the ascetics that live on the banks of the Mandakini and Pampa lake. You are the shelter of all. Please save us and there is no greater protector than you."

1 Some of these names signify their asceticism as Salilahar means one who lives on water only Vayabhuksha means who feeds only on air.

uous Ram replied, 'O sages ! Please do not

I am your obedient servant Since I
to the forest to redeem father from his
remedy this oppression of the Rakshasas"

ssured them, Ram went in the company

, After crossing many deep streams, Ram

ofty peak like the Sumeru mountain A

extended at its foot and Ram on entering

ermitage in which was seated a sage stained

ned Sutikshna

ing him, Ram said with due humiliation,

lone ! I have come to pay my respects

se break your silence "

kshna after embracing Ram, said, "O, hero !

ne here safely ? This hermitage seems to

provided with its lord It is for your

ave not yet renounced this body and

eaven I have heard that you have been

our kingdom and have been dwelling in

ita To-day, Indra came to my place

me about the region I have acquired by

nerits My boy ! I now ask you, for my

to live in my hermitage with Lakshman

1 replied as Indra unto Brahma, "I shall

eful region by my own piety, and I have

sage Sharabhangha of the Gautama clan

ood to all Please tell me where am I to

rest ?"

famous sage, Sutikshna, said, "You live

in my hermitage. A large number of hermits reside here and it is also plentifully provided with fruits and roots all round the year. Only herds of deer come to his place they are bold but do not commit any harm they simply bewitch the people by their tempting beauty. There is no other danger or interruption here."

Gentle Ram then said "If I slay these deer by sharp arrows you will be pained at heart so I don't mean to live here long."

Sutikshna then said his evening prayers and when night came the sage offered Ram an ascetic meal.

In the morning, Ram took his bath with Janaki in the translucent stream and after saying his morning prayers went to Sutikshna and said "We are extremely grateful for your kind hospitality now I ask your permission to leave the place. We have been greatly anxious to see the hermitages of the ascetics, and the Rishis with me are asking me to make haste. Allow us to go before the sun assumes a haughty look like a low person who has acquired wealth by evil means."

Ram then greeted Sutikshna with Lakshman and Janaki and Sutikshna blessing them said "Go now safely with Lakshman and Sita will follow you like a shadow. Behold the beautiful ashramas of the ascetics residing in the Dandaka forest. You will find the woods in bloom and visited by deer and lovely feathered tribes, echoing with the wild notes of peacocks lakes and pools strewn with lotuses and water lilies, and visited by swans and ducks, and you will come across there beautiful fountains."

He went round the sage and took his leave
 Hanaki then handed over swords and bows
 and

Ram was about to set out with Lakshman
 Hanaki said, "My lord! Virtue can only
 be by renouncing all low desires. There are
 four of sins, falsehood, adultery and anger with-
 out provocation. The last two are more grave
 than the first one. You have never told any lies, nor
 in the future. You have no lustful hankering
 for a wife, nor will you have that, rather you
 are true to your own wife. Virtue and truth are
 yours. You are truthful, learned and have
 control over your senses. You are firm to your vows
 made to your father. But you are now engaged in
 an act which one commits through ignorance
 of a creature without any offence. You have
 protected the ascetics living in the forest, you
 are, proceeding with Lakshman with bows
 to the Dandaka forest. But I have become
 anxious on account of your departure. I am
 concerned about your actions and of the means that may
 lead to your happiness. But at every step I feel
 anxious on thy account. I don't wish that you
 go to the Dandaka forest. If you go there you
 will be involved in a conflict with the Rakshasas,
 in the presence of arms highly in flames. Kshatriya

! Formerly a pious ascetic was engaged in
 meditation in the calm recess of the woods

Indra in order to disturb his religious meditation once appeared in the guise of a warrior and kept his sword as a trust with the ascetic. The ascetic then in fear of the violation of the trust, used to roam about the forest with that sword in hand, even when he went to gather fruits and roots. From this constant carrying of the sword, the ascetic by degrees grew cruel and at last he gave up all religious meditations and became engaged in the slaughter of all creatures. This story I have related to you just to illustrate that as fire produces change in the fuel so contact of arms brings about a change in the human mind. My husband ! Of course, I do not pretend to give you any advice but I humbly remind you of this out of love and deep regard for you. It is not proper to kill any creature unless it does some grave injury. A Kshatriya hero should do only that much which might be necessary for the protection of the ascetics living in the forest, and nothing more. Ah ! Where are arms, where is the forest ? Where is religious meditation and where is Kshatriya valour ? These are quite antagonistic to each other. Please hold in respect what is proper to an ascetic. Resume the duties of a Kshatriya after your return to Ayodhya. You have been obliged to abdicate the throne and repair to the forest and my father-in-law and mother-in-law will be greatly pleased if you lead the life of a hermit. From righteousness comes wealth and from wealth happiness in short everything comes from religion.¹ Intelligent people acquire righteousness even

1 The Sanskrit phrase *Dharma, Artha Kama Moksha* is very difficult to translate—*Dharma* apparently means righteousness though

their bodies but religion cannot come from happiness. My lord ! You know everything is unknown to you. Who can aspire to matters of religion ? I have said all these the fickleness of a woman. Consult with and decide your course of action."

Janaki's speech Ram said, "O noble lady ! stly expounded the duties of a Kshatriya out hat shall I say in reply ? You have yourself Kshatriya should bear arms so that there may word as 'the distressed'. Now, the hermits aka forest in distress have applied to me for are harmless people and live on fruits and ie cruel Rakshasas have caused great dis- hem, cannibal monsters are feeding on their e promised them all help that lies in me, hem what I would do. They asked for my and said that they could have themselves ie Rakshasas by their spiritual power but take away much from their religious merit, not wish to do that and for this reason they g refrained from cursing them. They further ey were living in the forest depending on out the slightest remorse I can give up my e even renounce you along with Lakshman, swerve from my promise given to the

nifies religion, *Artha* literally means wealth, but it hing like assets (as used in Political Economy), that is ans that will enable one to obtain his objects of desire gnated by the word *Kama*—covetousness or lust

Brahmans. How can I act otherwise that what I would have done even without their asking? Janaki! I have heard with gladness what you have said out of your love and good wishes towards me. Nobody says anything to him who is not dear to him you are worthy of your birth. You are dearer to me than life, so please approve of my desire."

Having said this, Ram proceeded towards the romantic forest with Lakshman carrying the bow in his hand. Ram went first, Sita was in the middle and Lakshman followed them with bow in his hand.

CHAPTER III

SAGE AGASTYA

They passed various streams, lakes and hills in their journey. They then came to a lake measuring about a *Yojana*. Its water was clear as crystal and was beautiful with white and red lotuses. Aquatic birds were sporting on its surface and elephants stood on its banks. Sweet music was being heard on its bank but no human being was to be seen. Ram and Lakshman were greatly astonished at this, and they asked a hermit named Dharmabhrat. "It is indeed a wonderful thing. We are greatly curious to know something about it." Dharmabhrat said, "This tank is known as the Pampasara formerly sage Mandakarni constructed it by psychic power. Its waters never become dry. Once upon a time Mandakarni practised severe penances for ten thousand years.

ted within this tank The gods got frightened thinking that the Rishi might ask for some of s, they engaged five nymphs to decoy the hermit. fell a prey to his passions, and those nymphs his wives Mandakarni then grew young by power and he built a secret chamber for those

They then lived happily with him. The sage morously sporting with them, it is the sweet sounds of their ornaments that you hear "

then found a beautiful and bright hermitage ie lived with Lakshman and Sita After some quitted that cottage and lived at some place for onths, somewhere for a year, at some place for nth, somewhere for six months or for a month alf, or for several months together Thus ten ssed

r this Ram came back to sage Sutikshna's ge, and one day he respectfully said, "O, holy I have heard from many that the great sage a lives in this forest; but this is such a vast forest cannot ascertain that place Now tell me where beautiful penance-grove that I may go there to y respects with Lakshman and Janaki It is my desire to attend upon him "

ikshna cheerfully replied, ' I thought that I should ask you to do so, but fortunately you have asked rself I shall tell you where lies the hermitage of ya After going four yojanas to the south you will across the hermitage of Idhmavaha, brother of ya The place is beautiful and abounds in Pippali

trees, and there are plenty of fruits and flowers and crystal lakes. Pass one night there and you will find the hermitage of Agastya at a distance of one yojana. The spot is highly beautiful and abounds in various kinds of trees. If you are desirous of seeing him you may start even to-day."

Ram then greeting Sutikshna set out for Agastya's hermitage with Lakshman and Sita. Ram covered a long distance by observing the romantic beauties of the woods, hills and streams. Ram then cheerfully observed 'Surely the hermitage of Idhmavaha is quite nigh. Look! How the trees are bent down with fruits and flowers, a pungent smell of the ripe pippalis is coming from the forest. Fuels and faggots are scattered here and there, and the ground is strewn with bright kusha grass, and blue columns of smoke are rising from the woods. From what has been said by sage Sutikshna it is clear that this is Idhmavaha's ashrama. His brother Agastya for the good of mankind has rendered the southern quarter habitable by destroying a Daitya cruel as death.

"Formerly two formidable Asuras named Ilval and Vatapi used to live here and used to slaughter Brahmans. Cruel Ilval assuming the guise of a Brahman used to invite in Sanskrit the Brahmans to the Sradh ceremony and when the invited Brahmans came he used to feed the Brahmans by cooking his brother Vatapi who wore the form of a sheep. When the meal was over Ilval shouted aloud 'Come out, Vatapi!' Vatapi, too bleating like a ram came out by tearing the bodies of the Brahmans. Thus they have killed many Brahmans. Once

t the request of the gods ate Vatapi, being the Sradh After giving him water for wash-nds, Ilval cried, "Come out, Vatapi" Then ya replied with a smile, 'Ilv'al' Your brother of a sheep has repaired to the abode of ; digested by fire , so he cannot come out.'

Ilval hearing of his brother's death rushed to- sage in fury, but he was at once reduced to e fiery look of the great ascetic This is the of Idhmavaha brother of that great Agastya performed that arduous feat out of pity to-Brahmans "

n went down and the evening came Ram is evening prayers and accepted the hospita-mavaha with Lakshman and Janaki and passed here In the morning Ram took his leave t for the hermitage of Agastya

proceeded surveying the picturesque woods in aquatic Kadamva, Panasa, Asoka, Tinisha, Madhuka, Vilva and Tinduka and other es These trees were covered with flowery oughly handled by the elephants with their d abounding in monkeys and wild birds

sight, Ram said to Lakshman, "I find the place I have heard about it The woods are green asts and birds appear to be gentle Probably age of the great'sage is not far This hermit- ubt belongs to the famous sage Agastya who red the southern quarter safe by destroying -like Asura For fear of him the Rakshasas

do not dare to enter this place, but only cast their looks from a distance. From the time he has fixed his abode the rovers of the night have forgotten their former hostility and have become gentle. It is said that no danger befalls him whoever takes the name of Agastya."

"The Vindhya mountain was rising high to obstruct the rays of the sun but it has ceased to do so in obedience to Agastya's command. This is the hermitage of that long lived and famous hermit. He is adorable, pious and is always engaged in doing good to the honest people. He will do us good if we go to him. I shall pass here the rest of the term of my exile. The Gandharvas, the Siddhas and the Rishis here pass their time in meditation and in spare fast. Here is no room for any cruel, deceitful or vicious person. Here the gods, Yakshas, Patangas, Urugas live on frugal meal. Here the ascetics obtain salvation, and after casting off their mortal bodies, and assuming new forms, they ascend to heaven in cars resplendent as the sun. Lakshman! We have arrived at the sacred hermitage. You go first and inform the great sage of my arrival with Janaki.

Lakshman on entering the *ashrama* said to one of the disciples of Agastya "The eldest son of King Dasarath, heroic Ram, has come with his wife Janaki to see the sage. I am his younger brother. You might have heard that I am devoted to him. We have come to this dreadful forest in obedience to our father's mandate. We wish to see the worshipful Agastya please do what you think best.

Maharshi Agastya hearing this, from his disciple

indeed my good luck that Ram has come to
 was expecting this. Go, my boy, just bring
 brother and wife with due honours."

He then hurried to Lakshman and told
 he might come to see the great sage.

He entered the hermitage abounding in gentle
 held there the seats of Brahma, Agni, Rudra,
 Ishta, Soma, Bhaga, Kuvera, Vayu, Dhata,
 Varuna holding the noose, Gayatri, of Vasuki,
 of Kailukya and of Dharma¹

The sage Agastya with his disciples was awaiting
 the coming of Ram. Ram on seeing that effulgent
 Lakshman, "My boy! The sage Agastya
 has come from his retreat. I can infer him to be
 in his solemn gravity."

Seeing Ram saluted the great sage beaming
 Agastya embraced Ram and offered him
 water for washing his feet and enquired after

After offering oblations into fire the
 presented *arghya* and food to them according to
Vanaprastha life. Ram sat down with joined

Agastya resumed his seat

The sage Agastya said, "My boy! If the guest
 is received with due hospitality, even an ascetic
 will not feed upon his own flesh like a false witness
 in the world. You are king, righteous, heroic,

particular places assigned for the worship of each one of the
 deities. They are the Vedic gods, but in the yoga
 are different seats or bodily postures of such names.

noble and adorable you have graced my hermitage as a dear guest." With these words Agastya offered plenty of flowers, fruits and roots, and said "My boy ! Indra has presented this golden, celestial bow of Vishnu beset with diamonds, made by Vishvakarma and infallible arrows glittering as the sun's rays named Brahmadata. This inexhaustible quiver is full of arrows flaming as fire and there is in golden scabard a sword with golden hilt. Formerly Vishnu conquered the Asuras with this bow. Now take these weapons as Indra carries the thunderbolt.

Saying this Agastya, presented all those weapons to Ram and said, "Ram ! I am glad that you have come to see me with Janaki Lakshman ! May you be happy. I have been much pleased with you all. I am sure you are fatigued by the journey specially Janaki must be eager for rest. This tender girl never suffered any hardship before. She has come to the forest only out of her deep love for her husband. Do that as she may feel comfortable here. She has done a very arduous thing by following you. It is the nature of women from the beginning of creation that they become attached to persons in affluence but leave them in adversity. In their attachments they are unstable like lightning, in snapping affection they are sharp as weapons and in evil they are quick as the wind or the winged bird. But your wife is free from all these faults and she has thus become foremost of chaste women like Arundhati in heaven. The place will no doubt be sanctified if you live here with her and Lakshman

s Ram modestly replied, "You are my superior by of respect and I think myself fortunate since you have been pleased with our Now kindly indicate to me a part of the ere there is no scarcity of water so that I may e happily by building a cottage "

upon Agastya plunged himself in meditation ment and then said, "My boy! There is a autiful place called Panchavati at a distance yanas from this place There are plenty of l roots. There is no scarcity of water, and plenty of birds and deer Go, build there a and live happily with Lakshman. My boy! ascertained your feelings by my yoga You first to live here but since you have already changed and I ask you to repair to the Panchavati ce is not very far from here. Janaki will surely y there You will be able to protect the hermits t that peaceful, secluded forest. You possess d also good manners Yonder is the Madhuka Proceed towards the north of the forest by ur attention on the Nagrodha trees, you will e by a hill and close to it lies the picturesque ati "

Agastya's words, Ram saluted the great sage eeded with Lakshman and Janaki carrying the the quiver with him. On his way Ram saw able bird of a very huge size, and thinking it onster he questioned, "Who art thou?"

Thereupon the bird replied with a sweet voice, "My boy ! I am a friend of your father

Thereupon Ram bowed down and asked his name and lineage. The bird then in the course of giving his genealogy began with a narration from the beginning of creation and said, My boy ! I shall now tell you from the beginning who were known as Prajapatis in ancient time. Listen to me. Of the Prajapatis Kardama was the first. Then came Vikrita Shesha powerful Shvanu Marichi, Atri, Kratu, Pulastya Pulaha Angira Prachetas Daksha, Vivasvat Arishtanemi and Kashyapa. Sixty daughters were born to Prajapati Daksha, and of them Kashyapa married eight. Their names were Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kalika, Tamra, Krodha, Vasha, Manu and Anala. After marriage Kashyapa told his wives to bring forth children who would be lord of the three worlds like himself. At this Aditi, Diti, Danu and Kalika agreed but some of them disagreed. Afterwards eight Vasus, twelve Rudras, twin Aswini Kumars and other thirty three¹ gods were born of Aditi's womb, and the Daityas² were born of Diti. Then Aswagriva was born of Danu and Narak and Kalaka were born of Kalika. Kraunchi was born of Tamra. Kraunchi, Bhasi, Shyeni, Dhritarasthri and Shuki, these famous five daughters were born of Tamra. Then Ulaka was born of Kraunchi. Bhasa was born of Bhasi, Shyena

1 These thirty-three subsequently in popular imagination have been elaborated into thirty three millions.

2 Cores, equals to the Titans of Greek mythology.

a from Shyeni Swans, ducks, *chakravakas* from Dhritarasthri and Nata from Shuki Nata to a daughter called Vinata Afterwards ten were born of Krodhavasha's womb and they were, Mrigamada, Hari, Bhadramada, Matangi, Shweta, Surabhi, Sulakshmana, Surasa and all the deer were born of Mrigi, Bhallaka, and Sumaras were born of Mrigamada, a named Iravati was born of Bhadramada, and Airavata Lions and monkeys were born of mb Tigers and Go-langulas were born of elephants were born of Matangi and the guarding the cardinal points of the world of Shweta Two daughters were born to Rohini and the famous Gandharvi Bovine e born of Rohini and horses of Gandharvi ve birth to many-hooded serpents and Kadru snakes

wards man was born of Manu¹ Brahmans from the mouth, the Kshatriyas from the shyas from the thighs and the Sudras from her sacred fruit-bearing trees were born of Anala. and Aruna were born of Vinata—Shuki's ighter I am the son of that Aruna named Shyeni is my mother and my elder brother is Ram ! If you wish, I may be a friend to you

we get in simple folklore a story of the creation of various living beings, and in this gradation man comes last hence has established this point beyond all reasonable

in your forest life. When you will be out with Lakshman in quest of fruits I shall protect Janaki.

Then Ram embraced him in delight and bowed to him in respect and heard from him the tales of friendship between his father and the bird. Ram then trusted him with the charge of Janaki's protection and entered the Panchavati forest.

CHAPTER IV

THE PANCHAVATI

Ram arriving at the Panchavati forest, full of ravenous animals, said to Lakshman, "We have reached the place spoken to by worshipful Agastya. This blossoming forest is Panchavati. Survey it round and select a site where we may build a cottage. Just find out a place where Janaki will feel happy and we may be comfortable in every respect, where there are tanks and where the water is transparently clear and which abounds in fruits, flowers, faggots and Kusha grass. You are most competent in these things."

Then gentle Lakshman with joined hands spoke to Ram in presence of Janaki. Arya! I shall ever serve you as your obedient servant. You yourself please select a spot and then order me to build a cottage.

Ram was greatly pleased with Lakshman's words and then selected a highly commendable site and taking Lakshman there Ram said. My boy! Here is abundance

rees, the ground is even and beautiful. At a
 nce from this spot there is a beautiful pool
 d with sweet-scented lotuses, pink and red,
 ewly-risen dawn. There lies the Godavari
 y sage Agastya. The stream is always visited
 ns, cranes and the *chakravakas*. Many thirsty
 to drink its water and blossoming trees stand
 . Look, there is the high range of hills with
 nd hollows. Hear the peacock's shrill cries
 bounds in gold, silver and copper, and for
 nce it looks like an elephant with its body
 variegated colours'. Summits are crowned
 s, Tamalas, Palmyras, Dates, Panasas,
 a, Trimish, Mangoes, Asokas, Tilakas,
 , Ketakis, Shyandanes, Sandal woods,
 Lachukas, Lakuches, Dharvas, Aswakarnas,
 Shamis, Kinshukas, Patalas and other flower
 bearing trees entwined with creepers and
 The place is indeed romantic. Henceforth
 e here in friendship with Jatayu."

owerful Lakshman in a short time constructed
 cottage resting on graceful pillars. Its well-
 or was made of earth. Its bambooframe
 covered with strongly tied Sami branches,
 ha, and Shara leaves. After erecting the
 nan went to the Godavari stream. After
 its water he plucked lotuses, gathered fruits
 eturned to the cottage and after offering
 performing due rites for dwelling in a new
 hman asked Ram to enter the cottage. Ram

and Janakī were exceedingly delighted at the sight of the village and after a deep embrace Ram said in affectionate words, My darling ! I am more than delighted. You have accomplished a wonderful feat. Accept my embrace as thy reward. You are a reader of human heart. You are virtuous. When a son like you survives, father appears to be still living through you, though he is gone to the other world."

After this Ram lived happily for sometime in that forest like a god in heavenly region

After the autumn came in the season of mists and dews. One day at that time, Ram was going to the Godavari and obedient and humble Lakshman followed him with a pitcher along with Janakī

On his way Lakshman said O sweet one ! The season that is dear to you has come. The year seems to have been adorned by it.¹ The skin has become rough with dews, the earth is full of crops, water is difficult to touch, fire is agreeable. By this time the people in order to take new rice perform a sacrifice known as the Agrabayan for the satisfaction of the gods and dead ancestors. There is plenty of eatables in the country and there is no scarcity of milk and articles prepared from it. Princes bent upon conquests reconnoitre the ground now. The sun's motion is now to the south. The northern quarter now looks shorn

¹ The season *Bhishma* corresponds to early winter

like a woman without the scarlet mark¹ on
 The Himalays being by nature the home of
 now justified its name having the sun at a
 distance The mid-day sun appears to be
 and none feels fatigued by a journey, only
 water are unbearable now The sun's glare
 shed, dews fall in profusion, the forest has
 nesome, and the lotuses have been destroyed
 ost Now, the nights are always grey with
 body can now lie in an uncovered place, the
 night are long and they can only be measured
 ht of the constellation of Pushya The
 of the moon has fallen to the sun and the
 is now always enveloped in mists, like a mirror
 eathed upon) grown misty by the vapour of
 The shine of the full moon appears dim through
 Sita grown pallid by heat The western breeze
 e intensely cold The whole forest is covered
 l of mist, and wheat and barley crops look
 n the sun with cranes and *kraunchis* in them
 ddy with their ears slightly bent with grains
 n brownish yellow like dates Its rays being
 ough mists, the mid-day sun appears like the
 the morning the sun's rays are feeble and
 d they look highly beautiful when they fall on
 grass wet with dews Look ! How thirsty ele-
 w away their trunks at the touch of cold water

by way of decoration on the forehead of a woman—a
 mark made by some unguent substance between the two

Ducks, cranes and swans and such other aquatic fowls though have arrived on the bank of the stream but do not dip in the water as the coward do not enter a field of battle. The flowerless woods being enveloped with frosty mists at night and with dew in the morning seem to be buried in sleep. The water of the river is enveloped in dense fog and the sand of the river-banks are wet with dew, and the presence of the aquatic birds is inferred through the mists only from their cries. Water everywhere, due to the fall of snow and mildness of the sunshine, is cold and sweet to drink. The lotuses have been destroyed by the frost only their stalks remain, but their pollens, petals and pericarps have fallen there is no more of their former beauty. Arya ! By this time, virtuous Bharat is practising greater asceticism at Nandigram being overwhelmed with sorrow for his deep brotherly love for you. He has discarded the throne and all things of luxury and does live on frugal meals and lie on the bare ground. Perhaps, by this time, Bharat too is bathing in the Sarayu being surrounded by his people. Bharat is noble, truthful religious, of subdued senses and of sweet speech. He is beautiful. His arms are long reaching up to the knees, his eyes are lotus-like, lean waist, and his colour is of soft green. That lotus-eyed hero has forsaken all pleasures of life and has clung fast to you. Though you are living in the forest but he is leading an ascetic life (in the city) He will surely secure heavenly bliss. It is said that a man resembles his mother in qualities but it

with Bharat. Alas ! How Kaikeyi, whose Dasarath and whose son is Bharat, could be
 could not bear any aspersion against Kaikeyi

" You may talk of Bharat, the lord of the
 ace, but do not blame mother Kaikeyi
 n firm in my resolve, but love for Bharat
 unsteady I do often remember his sweet
 words sweet as manna Lakshman, I know
 shall again meet Bharat and others !"
 after expressing his grief in those words
 the Godavari with Lakshman and Janaki
 performed *Tarpan*s in honour of the gods and
 s of the ancestors and then they said their
 he sun and the gods As God Rudra after
 beautiful with Nandi and Parvati, so Ram
 or his bath. They then returned to their
 er performing their morning services

CHAPTER V

SURPANAKHA

ed by the hermits, Ram was seated with
 the cottage and that time he looked like the
 conjunction with the star Chitra, and was
 h Lakshman on various things At that time
 u wandered leisurely there She was Surpa-
 sister of Ravana the lord of the Rakshasas

On arriving there the Rakshashī beheld beautiful Ram dark as a blue lotus, with lotus-eyes endowed with royal splendour whose personal beauty was like that of a Cupid who was mighty like Indra wore matted locks and possessed the gait of an elephant. The Rakshashī was at once smitten with love. (But to the contrast!) Ram had a graceful countenance whereas the Rakshashī had a hideous one. Ram's waist was lean but she had a bulky abdomen. Ram had an elegant head of hair whereas she had coppery locks. Ram's voice was sweet, but hers was grating. Ram was young, she was old. Ram was gentle, she was fierce. Ram was righteous, but she was vicious. Ram had mellifluous accents, but her words were harsh! In a word, Ram was beautiful, she was hideous. But being maddened with desire the Rakshashī asked, "I find matted locks on your head and bow and arrows in your hands tell me why you have come in the guise of a hermit with your wife to this region of the Rakshasas?"

Then Ram with his usual candour related to her everything said. 'There was a mighty king by the name of Dasarath. I am his eldest son, and my name is Ram. He is Lakshman, my younger brother he is greatly attached to me. She is my wife named Janakī. I have come to live in the forest in obedience to the wishes of my father and mother. Now tell me who art thou? Whose daughter are you and in what family you are born? You seem to be a Rakshashī from your form. However why have you come hither?"

Then Surpanakhā smitten with lust replied "I am

a, I can assume different forms at my will about the forest by striking terror into every heart. You might have heard of Ravan, the great Rakshasas, he is my brother, and who is long sleep, that supremely powerful Kumbha-
 pious Bibhisan, inimical to the Rakshasas, dable Khara and Dushana are also my brothers. I have even surpassed them by my prowess. Ram is beautiful and I have fallen in love at the very

I possess wonderful powers and can go wherever I list, I ask you to be my husband for ever. What will you then do with Sita? Sita is deformed and she is in no way worthy of you. It is I who am worthy of you, so look upon me as your wife. This Sita, is bad-looking with a lean waist and is ugly. I shall devour her immediately along with her. You will therefore be free to roam about with me at your will."

Upon Ram with a playful smile addressing Sita, began in jest:

"O worshipful lady! I am married. This Sita is my wife and she is always with me. A co-wife will be highly disagreeable to a woman like you. Here is my younger brother, valiant Lakshman. He is strong and beautiful and is leading a life of celibacy. He is quite ignorant of conjugal felicity, so he is not of taking a wife unto him, for your beauty, no man is, no doubt, worthy of you in every way. O large eyed beauty! Receive him as your husband as the sun's rays seek for the Sumeru mountain

If you be his wife you wont have any fear of a co-wife.

Surpanakha instantly left Ram and addressing herself to Lakshman said Beautiful as you are, I am the only worthy spouse of you Now accept me as your wife. You will live happily with me in the Dandaka forest

Then eloquent Lakshman with a smiling countenance gracefully replied You see I am myself a servant what will you gain being my wife? Will you be content to live like a maid servant? Ah, my red¹ beauty! I am under worshipful Ram be therefore the younger wife of Ram your desires will be fulfilled and you will pass your days in happiness. He will surely accept you by discarding that ugly unchaste, and lean old hag. O paragon of beauty! What intelligent man can remain addicted to a woman by neglecting such supreme grace?"

Hideous-looking Surpanakha however could not understand the joke and took Lakshman's words to be serious, and thereupon, under the intoxication of lust, she said to Ram "You are not showing me any affectionate regard by discarding that ugly lean old hag of unchaste character so I shall devour her in your presence and shall enjoy supreme felicity by getting rid of the co-wife."

Saying this the Rakshasi red as a burning cinder rushed towards gazelle eyed Janaki in extreme wrath as if a huge meteor was rushed towards the Rohini star Thereupon heroic Ram, preventing the Rakshasi terrible

1 One of the hue of a red lotus.

THE RAMAYAN

se of death, spoke to Lakshman in wrath,

Henceforth never crack jokes with a low-
an Look, Janaki is half dead with fear
immediately by deforming this hedious and
Rakshasi "

eing spoken to, powerful Lakshman in great
x his sword and in the presence of Ram
ff the ears and nose of Surpanakha The
as drenched in blood and burst into terrible
the rumblings of a thunder-cloud, and ran
the thick of the forest with up-raised arms

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST CLASS

akha then appeared before her brother Khara
an who was seated surrounded by the Rakshasas,
ll on the ground like a bolt from the blue
upon Khara of fierce energy seeing her lying
ound and drenched in blood asked in rage,
Banish your fears and amazement Tell me
deformed your beauty ? Who has hurt the
e by his digital end, that was lying harmless ?
eant through ignorance does not know that he
owingly drunk deadly poison and that death's
round his neck You are yourself formidable
assume different forms at will, now tell me
d you been ? Who has disgraced you thus ?

Who is so powerful among the gods, Gandharvas, Spirits and the Rishis? I don't find anybody in the three worlds that would dare injure you. However as a thirsty swan drinks only milk mixed with water leaving the latter so among the gods I shall pick out and kill thousand-eyed Indra. Whose frothy blood mother-earth desires to drink his marrow being pierced by my arrows? Upon whose corpse the ravenous birds want to feed tearing the flesh? Whom shall I attack none amongst the gods and the Gandharvas will be able to protect that wretched. Sister! Shake off the stupor by degrees. Tell me who is that despicable creature that humbled you in the forest by his prowess?

Then Surpanakha said with tearful eyes, "Two sons of king Dasarath live in the Dandaka forest. Their names are Ram and Lakshman. They are young beautiful and valiant. Their eyes are long like the petals of a lotus and they are clad in barks and black deer-skins. They live on fruits and roots and lead an ascetic life. They look like the king of the Gandharvas and bear regal signs on their persons. I can't say whether these two brothers are gods or demons. I have seen a perfect beauty decked in ornaments in their company and for her they have maltreated me. Now I desire to drink the warm blood of that crooked woman and of the two brothers and you will have to satisfy my desire."

After Surpanakha's speech, Khara in extreme rage summoned fourteen formidable Rakshasas terrible as

addressing them said, "Lo ! Two armed clad in barks and deer-skin have entered a forest with a woman in their company. men along with that wicked woman My solved to drink their blood to-day Go now lish the task by your valour She will drink in delight.

command of Khara, the Rakshasas were patched with Surpanakha like clouds driven

ving at the hermitage Surpanakha pointed id Lakshman together with Sita

eing the Rakshasas, said to heroic Lakshman. 1 with Sita just for a short time, let me Rakshasas that have come with Surpanakha " i please," replied Lakshman

ien strung his bow wrought in gold, and the Rakshasas said, "Hear me. We are sons arath and have come to the Dandaka forest We live upon fruits and roots and lead an

Why do you bear malice against us ? You ghly vicious and tyrannic over the hermits r request I have taken up this bow for your l Stand there where you are, advance not her If you have any love for life then go

pon those fierce Rakshasas, the destroyers of ans, with red hot eyes, said to Ram, whose y had not witnessed as yet, "You have pro- noble lord, Khara , you will have to lay

down your life in to-day's fight. You are alone whereas we are many not to speak of any fight but what power do you possess that you can stand before us? This day surely you will have to give up your arms being vanquished by our lances.

With these words the Rakshasas with their weapons rushed in fury towards him and threw their fourteen lances at Ram. Thereupon invincible Ram cut off their darts with his golden shafts and in great rage took up from the quiver his Naracha arrows, whetted on stone and glittering like the sun's rays, and discharged them at the Rakshasas as Indra hurls the thunderbolt. Those shafts after penetrating the hearts of the Rakshasas entered the earth like snakes into ant-hill. The Rakshasas gave up their ghosts and fell prostrate like cut-down trees. At that sight Surpanakha whose bleeding had ceased a little, but from whose wounds blood was still oozing out like gum exuding from a tree, ran to Khara and began to cry bitterly.

Khara seeing his sister again coming to him as if presaging some evil broke forth in anger. I deputed formidable Rakshasas living on flesh, on your behalf why have you then come again and why weep so bitterly? Those are my trusted followers and wish me always good, and nobody can kill them by violent attack. It is not possible that they have not carried out my orders. Then why are you crying saying Ah! My Lord! Why are you rolling in the dust like a (crushed) snake? I am eager to know the cause. Arise, don't

possible Surpanakha at these consolations of
 wiping off her tearful eyes replied "When I
 came to you with my lopped off nose and ears you
 were despatched with me fourteen fierce Rak-
 shasas they were all instantly killed by the heart-
 ing arrows of Ram! I have been greatly
 astonished at this astonishing feat of Ram. Hence I have
 come to you for shelter To speak the truth, I
 am all round me Now, if you have any
 action for the Rakshasas, root out that thorn of
 Ravana living in the Dandaka forest. He is my
 enemy If you cannot exterminate him I shall give
 myself even in your presence Me seems that you
 are not able to stand before him, even if you face him
 with your army on the field of battle You have the
 reputation of being valiant though you are not so Ah, you
 are not fit to our line! Leave Janasthan with your
 army without any delay If you cannot slay these two
 men then you must be weak, how can you then
 fight? In short, you yourself will be soon destroyed
 for lack of valour Dasarath's son Ram is exceedingly
 brave, his brother Lakshman too is quite formidable
 Now I have been disfigured"

-bellied Surpanakha thus lamenting before
 Dasarath was overwhelmed with grief and began to cry
 over her abdomen repeatedly

CHAPTER VII

WRATH OF KHARA

Khara being thus insulted in the presence of the Rakshasas addressing her in angry words said "Sister ! I have been greatly offended by this taunt of yours. This insult is unbearable like salt administered to a wound. Ram is a frail human being. I do not count him at all in my valour. He will die this day at my hand for his misdeeds. Now restrain your tears. Don't be frightened any more. I shall despatch Ram along with Lakshman to the abode of death. Drink his blood when he will fall by my axe. Being delighted with these words of her brother she began to praise Khara again through her levity. Then Khara being first reprimanded then praised by Surpanakha said to Dushana the captain of his army. Brother ! Call those fierce Rakshasas who are invincible in war and those who revel in cruelly injuring the people those who always carry out my wishes and those who look like dark clouds. Fetch also my wonderful scimitar sharp Sakai and yoke the horses to my chariot. I shall march in the van for the destruction of wicked Ram."

Then at Dushana's directions, horses of different hues were yoked to the chariot glittering as the sun and high as the Sumeru peak. Its wheels were made of gold and its pole was wrought in *Valdurya* gem and covered with a net of gold and ornamental designs of fish flowers trees, hills, auspicious birds of the sun the

and the stars in gold decorated the chariot, and in at one place arms were kept. Khara in wrath in the chariot. Seeing this formidable Rakshasas mighty arms and banners surrounded the car. Then Khara said in war-delight, "Don't delay any March quick to the field of battle."

Upon, fourteen thousand Rakshasas with lances, axes, mallets, Pattish, Shulas, sharp axes, wheels, burning Tomaras, dreadful Parighas, huge maces, clubs, and arms resembling thunderbolts, thus equipped for war began to follow after Khara's men with Khara's permission, the charioteer to drive the car in violent speed. The deep rumbling noise of the car filled the air.

Fierce Khara, dreadful like death, began to urge his charioteer to drive fast to kill the enemies in the battle.

At that time, a sable cloud, dark as an ass, began to pour blood upon the Rakshasas with a dreadful sound as a sign of evil omen. The beautiful horses of the army began to tumble down on the road that was strewn with flowers. A dark circle with a red rim was seen near the sun. A huge vulture suddenly attacked the royal standard and perched upon it. Ravenous birds of prey began to make a clamorous noise and inauspicious omens proceeded towards the south howling and crying, thus indicating evil to the Rakshasas.

The sky became overcast with huge black clouds, and the elephants emitting intoxicating virus from their nostrils. Thick darkness enveloped the forest, and

nothing could be discerned in that pitch darkness, not even different directions. Suddenly the evening appeared as if clad in a cloth soaked in blood ! Carnivorous beasts and birds began to utter shrill cries even in presence of Khara. The jackals began to howl by gaping wide the red cavity of their mouths, as if belching forth fire towards the Rakshasas. Suddenly a huge comet was seen approaching the sun and the sun became dim and suffered from eclipse though it was not the time of eclipse. Heavy gales began to blow and meteors like glowworms fell from the sky during the day time. The lotuses in the tank became withered fishes and aquatic creatures went underneath the water. The forest was covered with dusts even without a storm and the parrots began to utter piteous cries. The earth and the forest began to shake with a terrific din. Khara was then roaring in his car but suddenly his left arm began to throb, his eyes became wet his voice sank and he was seized with a terrible headache ! But Khara did not pay any heed to all these through foolishness.

Seeing these ominous portents on all sides, that are sufficient to make one's hairs stand on their ends Khara addressing his soldiers said with a laugh. I do not care for all these portents, as the strong do not care for the weak. I shall bring down the stars by my sharp arrows on the ground and shall bring death even to Death himself. To-day I shall not return without slaying haughty Ram and Lakshman in battle. Let my sister for whose sake their senses were so much perverted, be satisfied by drinking their blood. I have never been defeated in

you have witnessed that repeatedly Now, look of these two puny men, if I be enraged I have even Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt in battle "

During this speech, the doomed soldiers of Khara took their great delight At that time the Gandharvas and the Charanas were stationed in the sky and said amongst themselves, "Let victory attend Brahmins and those who are held in esteem by

Let Ram conquer these rovers of the night and with discus conquered the Asuras in yore "

During the time the celestials were talking amongst themselves, Khara pressed forward with great impetuosity. Shyena-Gami, Prithushyama, Jaina-Satru, Vihana-Durjaya, Karaviraksha, Parusha, Kalkamukha, Mahamahi. Varashya, Rudhirashana these chiefs went with him Mahakapala, Sthulaksha, and Trishira followed Dushana As the planets moved towards the sun and the moon, so the fierce army rushed towards Ram and Lakshmana in battle.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ENGAGEMENT

When fierce Khara came near the hermitage seeing all sorts of disturbances and evil portents round him, Ram became sad¹ thinking of the ill-fate of the Rakshasas and addressing Lakshman said "Look, Lakshman, all these dark omens presage destruction to the Rakshasas. Dark clouds are raining blood! Wild birds are uttering piteous shrieks. And my shafts are flaming in war delight and my gold plated bow is throbbing with restless energy. Our Victory is sure and the Rakshasas are doomed. A severe conflict is imminent. My right arm is throbbing repeatedly and your face too appears to be beaming with delight. When the faces of those that are engaged in a battle, grow pallid it forebodes that their end is near. Hark! The Rakshasas are blowing their trumpets. It is the duty of the sagacious people to take precautions before they are actually faced with any danger. Therefore take shelter with Janaki in some inaccessible crag screened by dense shrubs and creepers being equipped with bow and arrows. I request you to hide there soon. I don't wish that you should act otherwise, you are a hero and I doubt not that you can slay these Rakshasas by your valour but I wish to kill them myself."

1 To feel for one's enemy rushing unwittingly to the brink of ruin is indeed divine. This is a note-worthy trait in Ram's character
--Translator

pon, Lakshman taking bow and arrows entered
 ith Sita Ram satisfied with Lakshman's
 on a flaming armour and thereupon shone
 mn of fire in the midst of darkness, and began
 d the quarter with the twangs of bow and
 waited for the advent of the Rakshasas
 celestials, eager to witness the issue of the fight
 n the sky and prayed for Ram's victory
 by the Rakshasa hordes were seen on all sides
 e shouting, some were talking, some were
 n anticipation of victory, some were yawning
 were blowing their trumpets A terrible,
 noise filled the forest, and wild beasts ran to
 quarters Then the vast Rakshasa army, like
 de its way for Ram And Ram too skilled in
 lvance to meet the host casting careful glances
 When he met Khara's army, Ram stretched
 able bow and swiftly took up shafts from the
 id in his rage he became quite incapable of
 ked at like the Doomsday-fire On all sides
 Rakshasas holding bows and other arms in their
 th their blazing armours and various ornaments
 appeared like a mass of blue clouds at sun-rise
 in front of his army got sight of Ram near the
 At this he asked his charioteer to drive
 am, and the charioteer drove the car where
 d alone Shyena-Gami and others roared at
 of Khara who then shone like Mars in the
 a cluster of stars, and then striking broad-
 am with hundreds of shafts began to roar in

battle with delight. Other Rakshasas in the meantime hurled various weapons at Ram and they began to shower their missiles on him as if a huge cloud was raining over a firm mountain peak. Then Ram encircled by the Rakshasas looked like God Siva surrounded by the ghosts and Spirits in the evening twilight

Ram began to ward off their blows and weapons. As the mountain is not shaken by a thunder bolt so Ram was not moved by their striking but being pierced with arrows his whole body became covered with blood and then he looked like the evening sun surrounded by red clouds

After this Ram bent his bow into a semi-circle and began to discharge arrows at ease and those dreadful shafts effective as Death shone as tongues of flame in the sky. A number of Rakshasas were slain by them. Heroic Ram by his shafts cut down bows shields, armours, flag staffs, and arms of the Rakshasas. Horses elephants with their riders were struck down by his arrows. The infantry fell in number. As dry wood is consumed by fire so the Rakshasas were scorched and overwhelmed by Ram's arrows. The Rakshasas in fury hurled their lances and axes at Ram but Ram warded them off the Rakshasas being smitten by Ram's arrows ran to Khara for protection.

Dushana assuaged their fear and advanced to meet Ram with bow in hand. The fight renewed in great fury and the Rakshasas hurled all their maces, stones and stocks at Ram. At this Ram in anger aimed a flaming Gandharva weapon at the Rakshasas. Innume-

issued from his bow The sky was covered
 vs The Rakshasas were struck with wonder
 kness They could not ascertain when he
 shafts from his quiver and when discharged
 his bow They only witnessed a continual
 shafts and it infested the sky like the rays of
 he ground was covered with the corpses of
 asas. Some were dead, some were on the
 eath, some were rolling in agony in the dust
 vere rending the sky with their terrible yells
 -field became strewn with heads decorated
 ns, arms with various ornaments and gloves,
 own limbs, umbrellas, chowris, flags, chariots,
 s, elephants and broken arms Dushana find-
 ny scattered by Ram's shafts asked five thou-
 e Rakshasas to charge They never turned
 k son the field of battle, and their impetuous
 s quite tremendous At Dushana's command
 n to shower their missiles on Ram Ram warded
 ir blows and stood there like a bull with half-
 s (as if quite unconcerned) The slayer of foes,
 began to cut down Ram's arrows At this Ram
 ily enraged and cut down his bow with a razor-
 t, four horses with four shafts, and fell down
 of the charioteer with a crescent-shaped arrow
 ced his heart with three arrows Thereupon
 took up a formidable Parigha¹, it was plated

have lost all clues as to the exact nature of the weapons
 mer times All that we know is about the bow and the-

with gold studded with sharp iron *sankus* (pikes) and moistened with the fat of his foes, and with it he rushed towards Ram. At this, Ram with two shafts cut down his two arms with their ornaments and protecting gloves. Instantly the huge Parigba rolled down like a broken flag-staff of the banner of Indra and Dushana himself fell down on earth like an elephant whose two tusks have been broken down. At this powerful Mahakapal Sthulaksha Pattisha and Pramathi rushed towards Ram with their axes. Heroic Ram received those doomed generals with his sharp arrows as one receives at ease his guests. He cut down Mahakapal's head, crushed Pramathi and Sthulaksha fell down like a lopped off tree. Thus Ram destroyed in no time five thousand soldiers of Dushana.

Hearing this news Khara was greatly enraged and addressing his forces, he said "You see heroic Dushana has been destroyed with his five thousand soldiers by this wicked man. Now kill that man with the help of your various weapons."

Khara then rushed forward and Shyengami Prithugriva Jajnasatru, Vihangama, Durjaya, Karaviraksha Parusha Kalkamuka, Hemamali Sarpeshya and Rudhirashana—these twelve generals—rushed towards Ram and began to shower their shafts on Ram. Ram then began to destroy their forces with arrows ornamented with diamond and gold. As the trees are destroyed

arrow but that was not all. There are descriptions of arms which correspond to the fire arms of our time.—Translator

g so his arrows resembling fire with smoke,
 avoc amongst the Rakshasas He slew hun-
 thousands of them by the Karnis and the
 being smitten by his arrows covered the earth
 bleeding bodies As the Rakshasas fell with
 velled hair, the battle-field appeared to be
 the Kusha grass, and the Dandaka forest
 ream of blood turned into a veritable hell
 am on foot and alone destroyed fourteen
 Rakshasas, and of the Rakshasas there only
 Trishira survived

finding his troops thus destroyed, rushed
 m like Indra with his upraised thunderbolt.
 Trishira came near Khara and said, "O,
 Rakshasas, I am a formidable warrior, you
 ain from going to the risks of a fight, but
 instead I shall kill Ram and I swear by my
 shall surely slay Ram in battle, capable of
 royed by the Rakshasas This day, either
 meet with his end at my hand or I shall meet
 at his. Just refrain for a moment from the
 be a witness to it. If Ram is killed you will
 Janasthan with great delight, or if I die, go
 meet him in battle "

Khara said, "Then advance" At his word
 stantly got upon a resplendent chariot yoked
 s and rushed forward like a hill with three
 after showering arrows on Ram like a raining
 roared in exultation in a voice as deep as that
 kettle drum Ram began to rain his shafts

incessantly on Trishira. Then the two fought like a lion and an elephant against each other. Trishira discharged three arrows aiming at Ram's brow. Thereupon Ram grew exceedingly angry and said "Ah, is this your might? Your arrows have struck my forehead like shafts of flower. Now bear my darts."

Saying this Ram in rage pierced Trishira's heart with fourteen snake like arrows then with four bent shafts he brought down the four horses and with eight shafts the charioteer of Trishira and cut down his lofty standard by one arrow. Trishira then wanted to get down but Ram with three arrows in extreme rage cut down three heads of Trishira. And the Rakshasa instantly fell down emitting reeking blood on the field of battle.

Seeing Trishira thus fallen the remnants of the army ran away in fear from the field just as a flock of deer quickly runs away at the sight of a hunter.

Khara was greatly alarmed at Trishira's death and by the destruction of his troops which Ram effected quite single handed. He was distressed and seized with great despondency and fear.

CHAPTER IX

DEATH OF KHARA.

Khara in great despair rushed towards Ram twanging his bow and repeatedly discharging *Varachas* like blood-thirsty, angry snakes, as in the yore Namuchi rushed after Indra, or as the sun after the moon. He repeatedly twang the bow and moved about the field of battle showing his skill in arms. Ram too covered the irresistible arrows, glowing as sparks of fire, of the two heroes cut off the sun's rays. It was a deadly fight, both the heroes tried their utmost against each other. As the driver strikes the horse with the goad so Khara struck Ram with *Varachas* and sharp *Vikarnas*. Khara was then in his chariot, and at that time he looked like a lion holding the noose in his hand. Ram was wounded on account of his fight with *Rakshasa* hosts, and considered him to be formidable. And as a lion is never afraid of shy deer, so lion-like Ram was not frightened at the sight of Khara. Finally Khara came near Ram as a moth is drawn towards the flame, and with great lightness of hand he drew down the bow of Ram with the arrow fixed at the place where it was grasped. Then in a moment he discharged seven arrows like thunderbolts after severing the joints of Ram's armour stuck in. Thereupon Khara roared in heroic pride.

At this, the armour slipped from Ram's person and in his rage he shone like a burning flame. Ram then took up the formidable Vaishnavi bow producing a deep rumbling noise given by Agastya and rushed towards Khara by fixing shafts with bent knots and golden feathers.

Ram at once cut down Khara's golden standard and it fell into pieces on the ground as if the sun went down at the will of the gods. Thereupon Khara in anger smote Ram's chest with four arrows. Thus being wounded Ram in rage discharged six arrows and pierced Khara's head with one shaft, his arms with two and with three crescent shaped arrows his chest. After this Ram took up thirteen sharp glittering *Narachas* and cut down the yoke of Khara's chariot with one shaft four horses with four shafts, the driver's head with one, and the *Trivenu* of the chariot with three and two wheels with two arrows and his bow with one and easily pierced Khara's body with another. Khara then being deprived of his bow chariot and horses jumped down from his car with a mace in his hand. Meanwhile the gods above were greatly eulogising Ram for his valour.

Ram seeing Khara alighted on the ground with mace in his hand said with a gentle but a stern voice —

"Khara! You have done a despicable thing being the leader of a great host with elephants and horses. He who is engaged in cruel and injurious acts towards others can hardly save himself even if he be the lord of the three worlds. Whose acts are against the

of all, people crush him like a fell snake. As
 n's wife dies who unwisely eats hailstone,¹
 ople delight to see the end of him who through
 ust becomes addicted to vice. What have
 d by killing the pious hermits of the Dandaka.
 He who is hateful, cruel and vicious soon
 h his fall, though rolling in wealth, like an
 tree. In fact, as the tree blooms in its season,
 ings forth its evil consequences in due time.
 an immediately perceive the effect after taking
 , food, so the evil consequences of sin can
 e perceived. O, Rakshasa ! I have come to
 t at the command of the king for the punish-
 he vicious. These golden shafts of mine will
 e your body and enter the earth like snakes.
 our army you will follow the pious hermits
 ou have killed in the forest. Those hermits in
 riots will witness you despatched to hell. You
 r strike me as you like, do what you like, I
 g down your head to-day like a palmyra-fruit on
 nd "

ing these words Khara in red-hot eyes, broke
 th a laugh, "Ram ! Why do you boast ? Why
 hink so high of yourself by slaying the common
 as ? Those who are really heroic never boast
 own valour. It is only a vile and a despicable
 ra like you that brags of his self. In the thick
 who advertises about his own heroism by citing

us pedigree? In fact, as a piece of brass, glittering like gold betrays its inherent stain being tested by fire prepared with husks, so you have betrayed your fickleness by your self-eulogy. Ram! Don't you see me standing before you with my mace, like an immovable mountain peak variegated with minerals? I can destroy you and all others, like Death with this club of mine. I have many things yet to say but I must refrain as the sun will immediately go down and then there might be some interruption to the fight. You have killed fourteen thousand Rakshasas, I shall wipe the tears of their wives and children by killing you to-day.

Saying this Khara threw his mace like a flaming thunderbolt at Ram. That mace of Khara began to burn trees and creepers into ashes. But Ram instantly cut that mace into pieces and it fell on the ground like a snake deprived of its venom by the power of spell.

Then virtuous Ram said with a laugh, Khara! You have given the utmost proof of your valour. Now I find how inconsiderable is your might. You were so long bragging in vain. Look! Your mace has been cut into pieces by my shafts. You are a humbug. You thought you would kill your enemy by that but that belief is gone. You have just now said that you would wipe the tears of the friends and relations of the dead warriors but that boast will prove to be idle. You are extremely wicked and mean. As the (bird) Garuda stole nectar so I shall rob you of your life. The earth will to-day drink your gore when your head will be severed by my arrows. You will then with lopped off

l a dusty body embrace the earth like a damsel to win When you will be buried in eternal helpless hermits of Janasthan will freely roam without any fear This day, the hideous Raksh-
 ightful to look at, will run away with tearful distress and those low-born women whose you are will be overwhelmed with grief Ah, etch ! It is through your fear that the ascetics t perform their sacrifices freely "

eupon Khara broke forth in harsh accents

ite of real cause of fear you are indifferent. a braggart, and though your end is nigh you control over your tongue. Those whose days lbered, on account of their weak intellect cannot what is proper or what is improper "

ng this Khara pursed his lips and with an angry prooted a Sala tree and then with a deep roar led it against Ram, crying, "Ram thou art " Thereupon, heroic Ram cut down the tree , shafts and in rage resolved to kill Khara The of his eyes became red with anger and he began ore all over the body He began to discharge ows incessantly and foaming blood flowed in , from Khara's wounded body Being greatly ed by Ram's arrows and rendered furious by ll of blood, Khara rushed towards Ram in fury eing Khara thus coming towards him stepped o or three paces and took up an arrow blazing

like fire given by Indra. As the giant Darkness¹ was reduced into ashes by the angry look of Rudra in the Sweta forest, as Vritra fell struck by the thunder-bolt as Namuchi was slain by Phena, or as Vala by thunder so Khara fell being struck by the arrow.

At this, the gods above were struck with wonder. They showered flowers on Ram and beat their drums of victory in joy and said amongst themselves.

"Look! In what short time Ram has killed Khara and Dushana with fourteen thousand Rakshasas. Wonderful is his valour! What great fortitude he has displayed like Vishnu! Saying this they went to their respective abodes.

After this, the ascetic saints headed by Agastya came to greet Ram in joy and addressing Ram said "My boy! This was why Indra came to the sacred hermitage of Sharabhangā and this was the reason for which the hermits brought you here under the plea of seeing the sacred ashramas. Henceforth we shall live safely in the Dandakā forest.

After that heroic Lakshman issuing from the mountain fastness with Janakī greeted Ram in great delight. Ram being honoured for his victory entered the hermitage. Then Janakī with moonlike beautiful

1 These Vedic stories are bold allegories of some not ble astronomical or natural phenomena, as Vritra means a cloud and death of Vritra means clouds driven by the thunder. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of translating Andhaka Asura as giant Darkness.

THE RAMAYAN

hat all the Rakshasas had been slain and Ram
Her heart was filled with delight and she
him again and again

CHAPTER X

THE MESSAGE

at great fight only one Rakshasa named
ia survived, he hurriedly left Janasthan and
before Ravan and delivered the message
O King! The Rakshasas of Janasthan with
ve been killed I have alone with extreme
somehow managed to come here."

on as Ravan heard this from Akampana's
burst forth in red hot eyes, as if scorching
ng by the fire of his rage, "Akampan! Who
esirous of death has destroyed Janasthan?
o exit from this world? I am death of Death,
ra, Kuvera, Yama and Vishnu can't be safe by
y injury to me In my anger I can destroy
self, can burn Fire, I can resist the course of
id can reduce the Sun and the Moon into ashes
energy" Thereupon Akampana with joined
asked for protection in faltering accents and
eiving his permission and assurance said,
ing! There is a warrior named Ram, son of
h He is young, beautiful and of lustrous, green
le has mighty, well-shaped arms, and high and

broad shoulders. His valour is quite peerless. This Ram has killed Khara and Dushana in Janasthan."

At these words Ravan began to breathe heavily like a serpent and asked, "Has Ram come to Janasthan with Indra and other gods?"

Akampana replied, "O Lord of the Rakshasas! Ram is foremost of the bowmen and possesses celestial arms. He has got a younger brother named Lakshman. He too is equally powerful. His face is beautiful like the full moon and his voice is deep like the rumbling of a tambour."

Ram is united with Lakshman as fire is strengthened by the wind. He is king of kings and know it that none of the gods have come with him. His shafts, as soon as they were discharged, began to devour the Rakshasas like a five mouthed serpent and wherever the Rakshasas fled in fear they found Ram stationed before them. In truth, this hero alone has ruined your Janasthan.

Ravan replied "Akampana! I shall immediately start for Janasthan for the destruction of Ram and Lakshman."

Akampana said, "My lord! Listen to me what I have to say about Ram's valour. When that hero is enraged there is none who can resist his prowess in battle. He can turn the course of a flowing river, can bring down the stars and planets from the sky and raise the submerged earth by his arrows. He can resist the current of the ocean, the course of wind, can overflow the land by breaking the shores. He can destroy all creatures

them anew As it is difficult to attain heaven
be difficult for you to defeat him with all the

He is incapable of being slain by the gods
aras, but I tell you of a device for his destruc-
e listen to me with attention He has got a
wife called Sita She is in her bloom of youth
ully adorned with ornaments Her beauty
ery one with deep wonder, she is indeed a
ig women Not to speak of a human being,
s, no nymph, no Gandharvi, no Pannagi is
er in beauty Somchow enchant Ram in the
then carry away Sita It is sure, Ram will
e the separation of his wife "

approved of the proposal and after a
reflection said, "Akampan ! I shall start even-
ing alone taking with me my charioteer only.
n with Sita to the city of Lanka in great

this Ravan proceeded in a shining car yoked
, and it shone like the moon in the sky among
clouds

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT WAR LORD

After crossing a long distance Ravan arrived at the abode of Maricha the son of Taraka.

Maricha himself received Ravan and offered him seat and water to wash his feet and treated him with rare meats and drinks. He then asked "O king! Is everything well with the rovers of night? I have great misgivings in my mind seeing you alone coming here in such great haste."

Thereupon Ravan replied "Ram has slain the indestructible Rakshasas of Janasthan with their leaders. I shall now carry away his wife just help me in this undertaking."

Hearing these words of Ravan, Maricha said "O Lord of the Rakshasas! Tell me who is that enemy in the guise of a friend that has mentioned about Sita before you? Perhaps you insulted somebody and he has inspired this evil intention in you. Who has advised you to run off with Sita? Who wishes to cut off the head of the Rakshasas? He is no doubt your greatest enemy who has incited you in this matter. He is trying to extract the fangs of a snake by your agency. Tell me who has induced you to this wicked course? You were happy who has struck you on the head? Behold Ram is like an infuriated elephant, his pure ancestry is his trunk, valour is his temporal sweat, two arms are his tusks. Not to speak of challenging him in a

I can not even stare at him. Ram is like a formless being, his movements in the field of battle are his joints. His duty is to destroy skilful Rakshasas like a flock of deer. Sharp sword is his teeth and bows constitute his body. It is not proper for you like that sleeping lion. Ram is like an ocean, his bow is its alligator, swing of his arms is its mud, his bow is its water, shafts are its billows. O King! It is not desirable to face that ocean. Be pacified and return to Lanka. Live happily with your own wives. Ram live in peace with Sita in the forest." These words of Maricha, Ravan departed for

In the meantime, Surpanakha seeing the destruction of her kinsmen, ten thousand fierce Rakshasas with Khara, Akshaya and Trishira, yelled in grief and being greatly distressed by these tremendous feats of Ram came to be ruled by Ravan.

On arriving there, she saw Ravan effulgent like a sun of fire, seated on a golden throne raised on a diamond base and his counsellors sat in front of him, as they do around the throne of Indra. The great hero with a face as dreadful to look at like Death itself, ten heads, twenty arms, wide mouth and ample chest. He bore all the royal signs on his person, his hue was like the mild shine of blue gem (Lapis Lazuli), his eyes were white. He wore gold ear-rings on his ears and was dressed in elegant robes. The gods, spirits or saints could not defeat him in battle. He bore on his person the scars of Indra's thunderbolt and by the discus of Vishnu

and of other weapons in the war between the gods and the Asuras. The marks of striking by the tusks of Airavata were still visible on his breast. He could churn the ocean, uproot mountains and crush gods. He was the violator of others wives enemy to sacrifices, and forcibly took away Soma drink from the place of sacrifice. This great hero after defeating Vasuki in the city of Bhogavati carried off Takshaka's darling wife. He brought Puspaka chariot defeating Kuvera that could travel to any place at will. In his anger he destroyed the heavenly Nandan garden and Chaitrarath forest and obstructed the course of the sun and the moon in the sky. This victorious hero formerly passed ten thousand years in religious meditation and pleased Brahma by offering his ten heads to him and on account of the boon received from Brahma he was devoid of any fear of death from the Gandharvas, Pishachas reptiles birds and all creatures except man. A celestial garland hung round his neck. He was tall like a mountain his eyes were large and bright. He was cruel fierce harsh hater of the Vedas and the terror of all creatures.

Surpanakha stupefied with fear beheld such Ravan, her brother. Then Surpanakha in great anger broke forth before the councillors, Ravan! You are wilful and intoxicated with lust, you don't know what great danger awaits you. People never honour a king who is greedy and addicted to sensual pleasures as they do not prize the fire of funeral pyre. The kingdom of the king who does not himself discharge his duties is doomed to ruin. Who does not employ envoys and does not

in due time to his subjects and who has
 dence, people shun such a king from
 elephant avoids mud of the river-bed
 is in the hands of his ministers and does
 is kingdom, prosperity is never noticed
 k submerged in ocean Ravan ' You
 e is not a single spy in any part within
 n Then how can you hope to rule in
 y to the gods, and Gandharvas and Dana-
 oolish like a child and you don't know
 l to know How can you then hope to
 ng, whose spies, treasury and policy are
 control is no better than a common man
 o learn about their impending dangers
 ies are reputed to be far-sighted But you
 nd your councillors are mediocres , there-
 know about the destruction of Janasthan
 Ram has killed fourteen thousand Raksha-
 and Dushana He has given protection
 of the Dandaka forest. You do not realise
 l is impendng over the State This shows
 ss and have no independence Who is
 ritable and deceitful, people do not help
 en in difficulties The king who is self-
 angry, is slighted by all and is destroyed
 ends and relations in times of peril No
 ork, nor anybody is afraid of him That
 enthroned and becomes poor like a man of
 seful purpose may be served even by dry
 or dust, but no useful purpose is served

by a dethroned monarch. Like a piece of cloth that has been worn out or like a trodden garden the king who has been deprived of his suzerainty becomes useless even though competent. But who is careful, virtuous, greatful and has sudden senses, nothing concerning the kingdom is unknown to him and there is no possibility of his fall. The king sleeps with his eyes shut, but is ever awake in his policy and every one can incite his pleasure or anger so he is never slighted anywhere. Ravan ! Since you are ignorant of the destruction of the Rakshasas it proves you are most foolish and do not possess all these qualities. You never care for anybody. You do not realise true situation¹ of anything. You are quite incapable of discerning between virtues and vices. The ruin of your kingdom is therefore inevitable.

Haughty Ravan the lord of untold riches hearing of his vices from Surpanakha's lips was plunged in deep thoughts.

1 In the original "you have no idea of time and place."

CHAPTER XII

RAVAN ROUSED

Ravan in great anger asked Surpanakha, "Who is Ram? What is his prowess? Why has he come to the inaccessible? What is the nature of the weapons the Rakshasas were slain and who has slain them?"

Surpanakha angrily replied, "Ravan is beautiful like Cupid, his arms are long, eyes clad in bark and deer-skin. He discharges deadly venomous snakes by bending his bow with gold rings and that looks like the bow of Indra. He is so quick in the field that nobody can discern when he takes up his bow and when he discharges them or when he kills. As Indra destroys crops by hailstorms the destruction of troops is noticed and nothing great warrior alone on foot killed Khara and his fourteen thousand formidable Rakshasas."

Dandas (an hour or so), and thus has slain the hermits and removed all dangers to the west. He has spared me because it is sinful to kill a Brahman.

I have got a brother named Lakshman. He is energetic, invincible and victorious like Ram, wholly devoted to Ram, as if he is Ram's right second self. Ram's dear wife lives in their

company. She is always engaged in doing good to her husband. Her eyes are drawn up to her ears, face is like the full moon and her hair is like that of polished gold. She is a perfect beauty. Her nose is beautiful, her hair glossy and her nails are well shaped and of reddish tinge. Her waist is lean, hips heavy, breasts high and plump. She looks like the beauty of the forest and as the Goddess of Wealth. No goddess, no Gandharvi, no Finiani, no Yakini is like her. In a word, I have not seen such a woman on earth. Whomever she will be and whom she will embrace cheerfully, that fortunate man will be more long lived than Indra in all the worlds. Ravan! That good woman is worthy of you and you are worthy of her. It is for you that I wanted to carry her away but cruel Lakshman cut my nose and ears. To speak the truth you will be agitated by the sight of her beauty. Now step forward for triumphal success. If you approve of what I have said then throw yourself unhesitatingly into the undertaking. Considering that Ram and Lakshman are quite helpless proceed to secure Sita. I have narrated everything about the destruction of Khara and Dushana and of the Rakshasas of Janasthana. Do what you think best under the circumstances."

Hearing this stirring tale from Surpanakha Ravan held a deep consultation with his counsellors and after listening to their counsel he secretly entered his stable.

Entering the stable Ravan asked the charioteer to yoke the horses to his car upon which the charioteer soon appeared with an excellent car. It was made of gold and ornamented with jewels. The car was adorned

faces in gold The chief of the Rakshasas, upon the car and proceeded with a deep se like that of a cloud towards the Lord of white umbrella spread over his head, two is were on his two sides and his body was ornaments The great warrior looked quite beautiful dress He was the great enemy of slayer of the Rishis He had ten heads, s and his colour was like that of a blue gem y he appeared like a hill with ten peaks, or ved by a flock of cranes

y Ravan arrived near the sea beach On re he found a range of hills and spacious lakes and tanks of crystal water At one stood plantain and cocoanut trees and at e stood Tal and Tamalas Birds and snakes heir shelters in these places, and Kinnaras arvas were freely roving there Great have conquered their desires, Charans, , Valkhilya, Aja, Masha, and Marichipa l in religious meditation Sportive nymphs ul damsels of heaven wearing heavenly nd garlands were sauntering in the place e haunt of the gods feeding on nectar and it ool by the sea-breeze There was plenty uli stones, and ducks, cranes, and frogs were ing there The amber cars decked with hose who had attained heavenly region by e were also to be seen There stood sandal ource of sweet extract, Aguru, of excellent

perfume, at one place stood Kokkala trees bearing sweet scented fruits, at another place there were blossoms of Tamala thickets of black pepper. Dried up heaps of conches and corals were scattered here and there. There stood gold and silver mountains, somewhere flowed pleasant rills and fountains. There were cities crowded with horses, elephants and chariots and full of grains, wealth and gems of women.

Ravan thus proceeded, breathing the pleasant sea breeze and surveying all these things round him. In his way he found a deep green Banyan tree under whose shade the hermits were absorbed in meditation. Mighty Garuda sat on one of its branches with a huge elephant and tortoise for his meal. As soon as he perched upon the branch it gave way under his weight. Under its shade the saints named Vaikhanasha, Valkhilya Aja Marichipa and Dhumra were engaged in religious meditation. Garuda out of compassion towards them flew away in great speed holding with one claw the broken bough hundred Yojanas long, and the elephant and the tortoise in another and after going a great distance he appeased his hunger by devouring those two huge animals. After that his strength was doubly increased and he became eager to steal nectar. There upon he carried off nectar from well guarded Indra's palace by breaking off the iron net. Ravan found that Banyan tree called Subhadra standing on the sea shore.

Then after crossing the ocean Ravan arrived at a beautiful asylum. There lived Marich on frugal diet clad in black deer skin and wearing matted locks.

CHAPTER XIII

MARICH AGAIN

received Ravan with due honours and offered
water to wash his feet and after offering
prayer to the gods, he questioned him with cogent

“How did you get on with Lanka? Why have you
not gained it?”

Marich said, “Marich! I am indeed in distress and
need only help in difficulty. I shall immediately
tell you everything that has happened, just listen

to me. I was born in the city of Janasthan where my brothers Khara,
Trishira and my sister Surpanakha and carnivorous
Rakshasas, and other Rakshasas also resided there
in the Dandaka forest. They were fourteen thousand
in number and they could perform mighty deeds and
were obedient to Khara. They always tyrannised over
the sages and ascetics of the forest. They were engaged
in a quarrel with Ram, and that man—Ram without
any angry word, single-handed killed all those
fourteen thousand Rakshasas. He has killed Khara,
Trishira and rendered the Dandaka forest
lifeless and fearful.

“Who along with his wife has been angrily
cursing his father, that weak and the lowest of the
gods has destroyed all the Rakshasas. He is vile,
haughty and fearless, greedy and of bad

character. He has no religion and does always evil to others. That stupid fellow without any provocation forcibly cut my sister Surpanakha's nose and ears. Now I intend to carry his wife Sita by force to my abode. Please help me in that undertaking. O hero! If you be on my side along with brother Kumbhakarna and others I am not afraid of the gods. You are most competent come to my assistance. There is none equal to you in might in resourcefulness or in devising means you are a warrior and a wizard. Uncle! It is therefore that I have come to you and first here what you will have to do for me. Assuming the form of a golden deer with silver spots frisk about in front of Sita. At your sight Sita will surely induce Ram and Lakshman for securing you. Then, when those two will be out on that mission I shall easily carry away Sita as the Rahu steals the moon shine at ease. Ram will be greatly weakened by the separation of Sita and then I shall succeed in destroying him easily.

Maricha's face grew dark as he heard Ravana's words. He was greatly alarmed by the proposal and being almost half-dead sucked his dry lips and stared at him with winkless eyes. Afterwards Marich for the good of Ravana as well as for his safety sorrowfully began

"O king! There is no dearth of men who will always speak sweet words but rare is the speaker of unpleasant but wholesome truths, so rare is he who is inclined to listen to it. You are fickle and since you have no spies you do not know Ram looking like Indra and powerful as Varuna. If he does not destroy all the Rakshasas in his

be good enough to us Sita has been born
 truction and you will be soon in great trouble
 of her You are highly wilefull and Lanka
 rule will come to ruin A king who is wicked
 like you, soon meets with his end with his
 ends and relations

1 Ram has not been cast off by his father
 nsider him as greedy, disreputable, haughty
 nest of the Kshatriyas He is virtuous and
 to everybody He has come to the forest
 the pledge of his father, deceived by Kaikeyi.
 ir good that he has come to the Dandaka
 rding kingdom and royal luxury Ravan !
 er wicked nor stupid, nor under the sway of
 Falsehood never attaches to him So it is
 for you to talk about him in that vein He
 rsonified and is devoted to truth As Indra
 of gods so he is the king of all Now, how
 to take away Sita by force from him, Sita
 by her chastity and devotion As it is
 o rob the sun of its light so it is impossible to
 Sita from Ram "

Don't rush into fire-like Ram whose sword
 arrows are the tongues of flame Don't
 h-like Ram by casting aside your kingdom,
 id love ot life There is no limit to the
 him to whom belongs Sita Ram is the
 Sita and you will never succeed in carrying
 a is dearer to Ram than his life and you will
 ed in subduing that devoted woman, un-

touchable like a flame. What will you gain by your vain efforts? I tell you that as soon as Ram will meet you on the battlefield your end is certain. What shall I say more? Life, happiness and kingdom are three rare things. Consult with your pious counsellors like Bibhisān and others as to the course of action in this matter. Think of the pros and cons of this act, ascertain your own power and the might of Ram and do what will be ultimately good to you. In my opinion it is not advisable to fight with Ram. Listen to me, I shall again tell you what is really good for you.

At one time possessing the strength of thousand elephants, I used to roam over the earth. My body was huge like a mountain, colour blue like that of a cloud had gold ear rings on my ears, and a crown on my head. I used to rove in the Dandakā forest taking a *Parigha* and thereby striking terror in the minds of the people and I fed upon the flesh of the hermits. At that time, one day the pious Rishi Visvāmitra went to king Dasarath and said that he had been greatly afraid of Marich and asked for Ram's help for the protection of sacrificial rites. Thereupon virtuous Dasarath replied that Ram was only sixteen that he had as yet not received full training in arms and he wanted to go himself with his vast army for the destruction of the Rakshasas. Visvāmitra replied that Dasarath's valour was well known in the three worlds, that he even protected the gods in battle, but none but Ram was match for that Rakshasa¹ and though Ram was a mere boy yet the Rakshasa would not be able to fight with him. So saying he took

him Ram protected Visvamitra and his stretching his bow in the Dandaka forest. a, beards did not grow on his face He was ad, and his colour was soft green He was tate of Brahmacharyya He had a single l raven-locks waved over his head and he chain round his neck Like the newly-risen umined the whole forest by his resplen-

us, being haughty for the boon received na I went to the *ashram* of Visvamitra. ntering the hermitage with raised arms ready Ram without any undue haste or anxiety ; his bow

1 my foolishness I despised him as a mere ed towards the sacrificial altar of Visvam- meantime Ram discharged an arrow and I ous into the sea hundred leagues away ! My ed because he did not intend to kill me at

long time I regained my consciousness and Lanka Thus I was saved

Ram was then young in years and not fully e use of arms yet he killed my other asso- llowers

sk you not to commit any hostility towards and disaster will surely befall you, and you. eries for nothing upon all the Rakshasas, ties and fond of sports and festivities, and

Lanka full of golden palaces will be reduced to ruins for this.

"Even the virtuous who commit no sin are ruined in the company of the vicious, as the fishes perish in a poisonous pool inhabited by snakes. After this for your own fault you will witness the destruction of the Rakshasas, clad in bright dress adorned with celestial ornaments and their bodies perfumed with sandal and then the remnants of your train will run away in different directions for shelter some alone some with their wives and you will find Lanka besieged in flames and reduced to ashes.

O king ! There is not a greater sin than to carry away another's wife. You have thousands of ladies in your seraglio, be content with them and thereby save the Rakshasa race. If you want to enjoy your kingdom wealth coveted life friends beautiful wives and honour for a long time then never act against Ram. I am your friend and I ask you repeatedly not to do this. If you slight my words and insult Sita by force then you will surely with your friends and relations, meet death vanquished by the shafts of heroic Ram.

"O king, I was somehow saved at the time of Visvāmitra's sacrifice but just listen what has occurred quite recently. Without being humbled even at the risk to my life, I again entered the Dandaka forest with two Rakshasas in the form of deer. My tongue was like that of fire teeth large and horns sharp. Assuming that formidable form of a deer I used to roam about fearlessly in the Dandaka forest and began to feed upon the flesh and

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hermits and thereby putting an end to all
actices Wild animals of the forest were
t my sight

course of my ravages I saw pious Ram living
t, and also saw honourable Sita and mighty

At the sight of Ram the memory of old
ved and I at once rushed for his destruction
age By that time Ram discharged three

e They came flying with the velocity of
e flaming thunderbolts At that I stepped
ttle distance, but the other two Rakshasas

ately killed, thus being saved from Ram's
e been leading the life of an anchorite. To

uth, under the shadow of every tree, I find
bark standing like death with the noose¹ in

and through fear I always see thousands of
me as if the whole forest is pervaded by

ice I startle even in my dreams at his sight
here there is nothing, and startle at names

th R such as Ratna² and Ratha³ In fact,
ess is not unknown to me and it is not

you to fight against him If he desires, he
Vali and Namucha Whether you fight

that at the time of death, Yama casts the thread
noose round the dying man's neck and drags out the
being encased in astral body, from this mortal abode
y hence Death is represented holding a noose in his

against him or not if you want to see me alive don't talk about him in my presence. Many pious men with their families on this earth have met with their destruction for another's misdeed. The same case may be with me. O Lord of the Rakshasas ! Do what you like but I shall not follow you."

"Ram is exceedingly mighty and intelligent he will surely destroy the race of the Rakshasas. Very well just tell me what great wrong Ram has committed by killing Khara in battle who challenged him in fight for Surpanakha ? O king, I am your well wisher and dear friend, if you don't pay heed to my words then you will be destroyed with your dear and near ones even to-day

CHAPTER XIV

RAVANA'S REPLY

As one desirous of death does not take any medicine so Ravana whose end was nigh, did not agree to these reasonable words of Maricha but harshly replied "Ah, low born wretch ! You have advised me what is highly improper. But your words will prove futile like seeds fallen on a barren soil.

"You will never succeed in this way to dissuade me from my hostilities towards that foolish and despicable human being who could renounce his parents, friends, kingdom and everything at the bidding of a woman. I shall carry away in your presence his darling wife,

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is my resolve and not even Indra with host
succeed in dissuading me You could have
this, if I had doubts in any matter and had
your advice as to its propriety and impro-
r its ways and means A counsellor, who is
hes well when questioned about anything,
humbly with joined hands before his mas-
ld point out what is good or favourable to
as sanctioned by polity The king who is
bout his dignity rejects even well-meaning
' are in any way insulting or contradict his
king assumes the spirit¹ of the five gods ,

Chandra, Yama and Varuna

haughtiness, might, kindness repression and
are found in him So you should honour
all occasions Marich ! I am your guest,
norant of court manners and through your
u have used harsh expressions towards me.
d for your opinion about the merits and
ny contemplated act , I only asked for your
, highly unbecoming to talk in this vein
ou will have to help me in my undertaking

final the word *Rupa* means forms but here it means
ment each of the gods produces in particular : Agni
; haughtiness, Indra (Jupiter) prowess , Chandra
ity, no doubt a gentle quality, Yama (Pluto or death)
ion or punishment and Varuna (Neptune, in Sanskrit
residing deity of wine hence) producing contentment

and now listen to me what you will have to do. You will assume the form of a golden deer flecked with silver drops and stray about in the sight of Sita in Ram's hermitage. Sita will be struck with wonder at your sight and will request Ram to capture you without delay. When Ram will follow you for that purpose, decoy him to a great distance and then cry in Ram's voice Alas, Sita! Alas Lakshman! Hearing that, Lakshman at the importunities of Sita and out of his deep brotherly love will proceed towards the direction of Ram. When both of them will thus leave the hermitage I shall carry off Sita as Indra brought Sachi. Marich! I offer you half of my kingdom do this and then go wherever you like. Now come I shall follow you in my car to the Dandaka forest and thus deluding Ram I shall return with you to Lanka after procuring Sita.

"But if you don't comply with my request I shall kill you even this day so you will have to do it for fear of death. He never wins good reputation who acts against his sovereign. What shall I say more? If you act against me surely your life will be in peril knowing this to be certain do what you think best.

Being thus commanded by Ravan Marich boldly replied in angry words, O Chief of the Rakshasas! Who is that wicked that has advised you to rush to your ruin with your children counsellors and kingdom? Who is that vile person that has been unhappy at the sight of your happiness? What foolish person has pointed to you the gate of death under the pretext of indicating you the means? Which mean fellow has instigated you to

such an act ? He wishes to encompass your
 acts Your enemies are comparatively
 they wish to see your destruction by a formi-
 O king ! The counsellors who do not restrain
 you deviating from the right course deserve
 why do you not yourself put them to death ?
 A well-willed king treads upon a wrong path, honest
 restrain him, but I find it to be otherwise in
 Kings can acquire virtue, wealth, fame and
 desire even residing in palaces, but when the
 wrong, destruction visits the people In fact,
 the fountain head of righteousness and honour,
 therefore be warned at every step That
 man comes to ruin who is unruly and haughty,
 dashed to pieces by wreckless driver. The
 an irritable king who acts against the welfare
 he become imperilled like a flock of deer pro-
 wolf I shall not be least sorry if I lose my
 now in the hands of Ram, but I am really sorry
 that you will be soon destroyed with your army
 will soon kill you after slaying me I shall
 myself rather fortunate in meeting death at his
 know it for certain that I shall die as soon as I
 and you will also meet death with your near
 ones by carrying away Sita If you succeed
 to carry off Sita, Lanka will surely be
 ruins Ravan !, I am your well-wisher and
 I ask you repeatedly stop, but you cannot
 words When death marks one as his own, to
 words of a friend become unbearable, no doubt”

CHAPTER XV

THE TRANSFORMATION

Marich again spoke to Ravan the ruler of Lanka with a sorrowful heart. Ravan! Let us now depart from the place. If Ram sees me again with bow in his hand I shall surely be killed. None will be able to rescue me alive by his prowess from his hands. You will also be killed. Ram is like Destruction to you. You are unrighteous what can I do for you? May you be happy! Let me now take my leave.

Ravan was delighted at Maricha's words and after embracing him warmly said, Uncle! You have now bravely expressed yourself to fulfil my desire. Now I recognise you to be real Marich so long you seemed to be a different person. Now get upon my jewelled car that courses through the sky and is yoked with asses. After alluring Sita go wherever you like, and in opportune moment I shall carry her off by force."

Then Ravan and Marich got upon the heavenly car and soon arrived at the Dandaka forest seeing various towns, villages, forests, streams and hills on their way. Ravan then alighted from his car and clasping Maricha's hand said "Uncle! There stands Ram's ashram surrounded by plantain trees. Now expedite the thing for which we have come."

Thereupon Marich in an instant resumed the form of an enchanting deer. Its horns were glistening like the finest jewels! Its ears like lotus-petals were made-

She fondly gazed upon the wonderful deer with eyes expanded with admiration and surprise. The deer too, saw the darling of Ram and skipped about to and fro, illuminating the whole forest by the splendour of its beauty.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DELUSION

Seeing that wonderful deer Sita of gold like resplendent hue called aloud in great delight 'O lord! Soon come hither taking Lakshman with you. Again and again she gazed upon the deer in delight and again and again she called aloud her husband.

Being thus summoned by Sita Ram hied to her side taking Lakshman in his company and espied the deer.

Then Lakshman expressing his suspicions said 'Arya! Meseems Marich has assumed this form of a deer. Previously in the guise of a stag, he destroyed many princes who came for hunting in this forest. Marich is a great sorcerer and he has assumed the form of this beautiful deer by magic. It is impossible for such a jewelled deer to exist on earth. It is surely a dark incantation there is no doubt about it.'

But Janaki, under the influence of a spell, interrupting Lakshman's speech broke forth with a cheerful smile.

My lord! That beautiful deer has captivated my mind, please capture it. We shall sport with it. Many a

THE RAMAYAN

is and its mouth, as if was made of red and
s } Its arch neck was little raised, its belly
of sapphire, its flanks were pink like Madhuka
d its colour was like the tint of a red lotus,
ovely. Its hoofs were made of dark blue
was of lean thighs and firm joints. Its body
with silver dots and sparkled with the sheen
metals and its little upraised tail shone like
The green forest and the cottage of Ram
by its wonderful beauty

he deer in order to tempt Sita began to stray
er and thither, sometimes browsing on creepers
s and then entered the plantain grove. After-
ttr act Sita's notice, it began to move about
ough the Karnika woods. Sometimes it
sometimes it slowed its motion, sometimes it
o its former place in wild sport, sometimes
d upon the ground, sometimes it approached
age behind a flock of deer and again returned
me'r place following another herd. Thus it
bo ut hither and thither. Other deer of the
ie near it at its sight but no sooner they came
we y at the smell of his body.

was most fond of venisons, but somehow
ied his appetite for this disguise

meantime, while Janaki, whose glance in-
like wine, was busy in gathering flowers and
ing about through the Karnika, Asoka and
roves she beheld this golden deer bedecked

She fondly gazed upon the wonderful deer with eyes expanded with admiration and surprise. The deer too, saw the darling of Ram and skipped about to and fro, illuminating the whole forest by the splendour of its beauty.

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'My lord! That beautiful deer has captivated my mind please capture it. We shall sport with it. Many a

rimara, Rik, monkeys and Kinnaras visit our
 they are lovely, no doubt, but none is half
 as resplendent and quiet. I have never seen
 like it. This golden deer, variegated in
 as beautiful like the moon, stands before me
 of the forest. O, how beautiful! How
 sweet, what a voice! This wondrous deer is
 beyond my mind. It will indeed be a wonderful feat
 to capture it alive. After the period of our
 exile we shall regain our kingdom; this deer will
 augment the ornament and beauty of our seraglio. To Bharat,
 Lakshmana and all of us it will always be an object

If the deer cannot be secured alive, its
 skin will be of great use to us. I shall spread
 the skin over the grass and shall sit upon it. It
 will be for a woman to command her husband for
 interest, but to speak the truth, I have become
 enamoured of that animal."

By these words of Janaki, Ram cast his glance
 at the deer with golden skin and sapphire-like horns,
 and tips, beautiful as the first blush of dawn
 any way¹ and in deep amazement said, "Look,
 is Sita for that deer! This deer will lose its
 life for its superb beauty at my hand. Not to
 this earth there is not one like it in the Chaitra-

How its golden down is evenly arranged
 and upwards! How red and flaming is its
 original—'like the orbit of the stars', but as it fails to
 reach as beautiful or luminous so I have taken the liberty
 to treat it as the Milky Way

tongue that shines like a drinking cup of sapphire and its flanks are bright like conch and pearl! Who is not attracted by the sight of this beautiful deer? Princes either for sport or for meat kill deer and in the course of their hunting they even collect many gems and precious metals. These riches obtained from the wild that fill their coffers are no doubt better than obtained from other sources like objects of enjoyment obtained with the very desire of those inhabiting the heaven. Political economists define that to be wealth which people, desirous of wealth pursue with a fixed determination. Now Janaki is desirous of sitting with me on this fine golden skin. Perhaps the skin of Kadali Priak, Pribeni or of goat is not equal to it. My boy! You consider it to be a Rakshasi magic, then surely it deserves to be killed. Formerly this cruel Marich killed many princes and ascetics. Vatapi was disgusted by Agastya. Since this wicked Marich wants to overcome me he will be killed like Vatapi. Now put on your armour and protect Sita carefully. It is our duty to protect her. If this stag be Marich I shall surely kill him or if it be a real deer I shall return with it. Look how eager Sita has become for that deer skin. So long I do not kill it, remain in cottage with Sita. I shall soon return with its skin. Lakshman! Powerful Jatayau is intelligent and expert protect Sita with vigilance with his help."

Warlike Ram having said this to Lakshman carried a sword with gold hilt and equipped himself with a bow bent at three places and with two quivers.

The deer seeing Ram thus set out concealed itself in fear and then appeared again. Ram in quick paces

towards the deer, and he saw everything illu-
re him by the halo of its beauty !

time, the deer was alternately casting glance
and then darted away from him. At times it
le the range of the arrow and at times it came
reach of his hand. Thus it tempted Ram.
fear of death agitated its mind and made it
it began to run fast, as if bounding through
hus at one moment it became invisible, but
oment it showed itself at a distance. Thus the
red like the moon peeping through scattered
thus it gradually drew away Ram to a great
om the cottage

pon Ram, desirous of securing the deer, was at
time much provoked and tempted. Thus
gued in the chase, Ram sat on a green turf
shade. During that time the stag appeared
ce along with other deer. Ram again ran to

At this the deer was greatly alarmed and
d at once and again appeared at distance
screen of a tree. Thereupon Ram resolved to
er and discharged from his bow a sharp arrow
like the sun's rays. That deadly shaft like a
ake struck the heart of Marich. At that blow,
ig high like a palmyra tree raised a terrible
life was about to ebb and in his last moments
his assumed form of a deer. He then remem-
van's words and thought of the means that
ice Sita to send off Lakshman from her side, so
n might carry her off in secrecy. He then

considered Ravana's plan to be the best and he cried in the voice of Ram "Alas Sita ? Alas Lakshman !"

His counterfeit form of a deer was gone and he assumed the heinous form of a huge Rakshasa.

Ram finding the Rakshasa bathed in blood and rolling in dust remembered Lakshman's words that it was Rakshasi magic. It was no doubt true he thought, but he had killed Marich. "But at the time of death the Rakshasa gave up his ghost crying Alas Sita ! Alas Lakshman ! Heaven knows what will Janaki do hearing that sound, and what will happen to Lakshman !" He started at this thought. He was greatly alarmed at this thought and became deeply sad.

He then killed another deer and was swiftly returning to the cottage with its meat.

CHAPTER XVII

SITA'S ANXIETY

Here Janaki hearing a cry coming from the forest in the voice of Ram said to Lakshman "Lakshman ! Go and ascertain what untoward thing has happened to my lord. He is crying in distress. I have distinctly heard his voice. I have become restless with anxiety. Go and protect him. He is asking for protection being in the grip of the Rakshasa's formidable as lions. Run to him quickly."

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Lakshman thinking of Ram's directions was quite
go At this, Janakī was beside herself with
d, "You are not going to Ram's help ever
' circumstances ! You are his enemy in the
friend You wish for his death in order to

It is clear to me that just for your lust for
e refrained from going to your brother You
he least love for your brother, therefore you
s disaster This is why you are so calm in his
stensibly following whom you have come to this
dies I see no necessity for keeping my life "

Janakī like a frightened deer said all these in
d mind, Lakshman replied, "O worshipful
en the gods, the giants, the Gandharvas, the
and the *sarpas* can not defeat your husband.
ind anybody in the three worlds a fit match
He is invincible, so it does not behove thee to
words Ram is not present, and it is not pro-
ve you alone in the forest Even the strongest
thstand his prowess If all the people of the
lds be united with Indra and other gods, they

as no doubt mad with anxiety and there was every justifi-
her fears for Ram, yet such a base insinuation against a
e Lakshman who had renounced his happiness and future
ed Ram like a devoted servant is at least unworthy of
anything else Dramatic necessity for this tragic fate was
erative and the poet found it hard to make Lakshman
m's injunctions unless there were such cruel imputations
Sita's anxiety for Ram and Lakshman's sense of honour
sition

will be defeated by the valour of Ram. Be comforted and banish your sorrow. Ram will soon return after slaying that golden deer. What you have heard is not his cry nor any supernatural voice. It is the magic of that wicked Marich. Noble Ram has left you under my care therefore I do not dare to leave you alone. You see we have incurred hostility of the Rakshasas by the destruction of Janasthan and for the death of Khara. Those malicious devils in order to delude us talk like this in the forest. Therefore don't at all be anxious for him."

Janakī then harshly replied with her eyes red in anger "Ah cruel wretch, the defiler of your line! Shame on your disgraceful conduct you are speaking thus because you desire Ram's disaster and there is nothing to be wondered at this, you are hypocrite, wicked and an enemy to your kith and kin. You wicked villain! It is either at the instigation of Bharat, or at your own initiative you are deceitfully following Ram just for me. But your desire will never be fulfilled. How can I desire for another having enjoyed the company of lotus-eyed Ram of sweet complexion like that of a blue lotus? I shall give up my life even in your presence. I shall not live even for a moment without Ram.

Hearing these horrible words of Janakī gentle Lakshman said with joined hands, "Worshipful lady! You are a goddess to me. I dare not reply to your words. It is not at all strange for a woman to use unjust and improper words, it is rather the nature of a woman and it is everywhere to be found. They are fickle, irreligious and crooked, and they bring about family dissensions.

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e, I can no more bear your harsh words. They
ng my ears like burning shafts piercing through
sylvan gods are my witnesses. I was behaving
towards you, but you have abused me in

Shame upon you, since you suspect me of
ase thing. It seems your ruin is nigh. I was
aying the mandate of the eldest brother, but
accused me on account of your womanly
May good betide you, I am going where Ram
ve great misgivings in my mind on account of
stitution that has arisen. May the deities of the
otect you! May I find you here returning
1”

Janakī replied in tearful eyes, “In absence of
all either enter into fire, or into the waters of
avari, or I shall put an end to myself either by
or by drinking virulent poison, or I shall throw
or a great height. But I shall not touch any
erson but Ram.” Saying this Janakī began to
id strike her breast¹ repeatedly. Thereupon,
an was greatly distressed and tried to console
nakī remained silent. Lakshman then bowed
ith joined hands and looking repeatedly at her,
ed towards Ram with an irritated mind.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MENDICANT

In the meantime Ravan assuming the guise of a mendicant, wore a piece of silken cloth bore a tuft of lock on his head, from his left shoulder slung a staff and a water pot he held an umbrella in his hand and his feet were shod in sandals. Wearing this guise of a Bhikshu he drew near Sita in absence of Ram and Lakshman, as darkness approaches the evening in absence of the sun and the moon or as the baleful planet Ketu draws near the Rohini star in absence of the moon. Thus wicked Ravan saw Sita seated in the cottage. Seeing him gazing at her with flashing eyes, the wind ceased to blow and the trees of Janasthan stood motionless, even the swift Godavari stopped her impetuous course in fear!

Then Ravan in the false guise of a mendicant like a (treacherous) well hidden in the grass, came near Sita as the (evil) Saturn draws near the lovely planet Chitra and he stood mute casting his glance on her

Bathed in tears and with a distressed heart Sita was waiting in the cottage lamenting for her husband yet her face was beautiful like the full moon, her lips red like the Bimba fruit, her teeth lustrous and her eyes expanded like the petal of a lotus. She was dressed in yellow silk and was illumined by the halo of her beauty

Ravan was at once smitten with lust and citing the Vedas he began to praise her greatly and thus he began

amble air, "Ah, My beauty of golden hue ! By
 lotus wreath you look like the lotus itself !
 You are Modesty's self, or Beauty, or Honour, or
 For a Nymph or Rati ranging at will Your teeth
 glossy and pointed like Jasmine buds Your
 crystal-clear, whose ends are tinged with red and
 with deep black pupils Your hips are heavy and
 thighs are round like the trunk of an elephant,
 most high and plump is like two closely placed
 with their thick and pointed teats and adorned
 bells, seems to be ever waiting for an embrace.
 beauty of winning smile, as the current of the
 carries off its bank so you have stolen my mind.
 so soft ! Hair so dark ! To tell the truth,
 less, no Gandharvi, no Yakshi, no Kinnari is
 In short, I have never seen a damsel like you
 Such superb beauty, such exquisite grace, this
 youth and this living in seclusion has made me
 anxious on thy account Leave this forest, it is not
 meet for you to live in this place ! It is the haunt
 of Rakshasas who can assume different forms at
 prosperous city, a beautiful palace, and a roman-
 ce are only fit abode for thee Ah, my beauty !
 and on your neck, the sweet smell of your body,
 apparel and even your husband seem to be the
 cause ! Are you in any way related to the Maruts,
 or the Vasus ? That you are a goddess is pal-
 pable This forest is not visited by the Gandharvas
 Kinnars, it is the abode of the Rakshasas, then
 how can you come here ? Here lions, tigers, bears,

hyenas monkeys and herons roam about freely Do you not fear them ? Are you not afraid of wild infuriated elephants ? Now tell me who art thou ? To whom do you belong ? Whence and where for have you come to this dreadful Dandaka forest visited by the Rakshasas ?

Then Janaka's daughter seeing Ravan in the guise of a Brahman received him with due rites of hospitality and offered him seat and water to wash his feet, and said Meal is ready

At that time she could not neglect Ravan seeing his grave appearance and clad in red and carrying a *Kaman dalu* In fact from various signs she considered him to be a Brahman and invited him as a Brahman ought to be. *Vipra !* Take your seat here, accept this water for washing your feet. This woodland meal has been cooked for you. Enjoy it freely

Ravan for his destruction thought of carrying away Sita by force. Sita was then waiting for Ram and Lakshman. She stretched her eyes for their sight, but she saw only vast, extended green forest on all sides.

CHAPTER XIX

THROWING OFF THE MASK

Then Ravan dressed as a mendicant asked her introduction. Janaki thought, "He is my guest and a Brahman if I don't speak out everything he may curse me now"

d, "I am the daughter of Janaka, king of
I have been married to Ram and my name is
er marriage I passed twelve years happily in
in-law's house. On the thirteenth year, the
lting with his ministers thought of installing
the throne. Everything was ready for the
a ceremony, but worshipful Kaikeyi begged of
ul husband two boons, one for the installation
and the other for the exile of Ram, and that
I give up her life by abstaining from food if
installed to the throne. King Dasarath tried
le her by promising immense riches, but she did

Ram was then twenty-five and my age was

Truthful and gentle Ram went to his father
installation ceremony but Kaikeyi harshly said
king had ordered for Bharat's installation and
exile for fourteen years. "Ram! Go to the
aid, she "and keep the pledge of your father."

readily agreed to her proposal, and acted
gly. Ram will give but won't take anything in
he will speak the truth and never falsehood
leads his life. Heroic Lakshman is his step-

He has followed us with bow in his hand and
an ascetic vow. He is a great help to Ram in
Ram has entered the Dandaka forest like a

We have thus been deprived of our kingdom
eyi. Take a little rest, you will surely be allowed
ere. My husband will soon return with venison
g different animals. Now *Vipra*! Tell me your
our clan and why you are travelling alone in the
a forest?"

Thus being questioned by Sita Ravan began in dreadful words. Janaki ! I am Ravan the lord of the Rakshasas whose prowess is dreaded by men and gods. Seeing you clad in silk and of golden hue I can no more be happy with my wives. I have secured a number of beautiful women from different places, thou dost become the foremost queen of them. I possess a great city called Lanka surrounded by the ocean and resting on hills. If you be my wife then you will saunter about in the garden of Lanka with me. Five thousand well-dressed women will wait upon you as maids of honour. Then you will no more like to reside in the forest.

At this Sita was highly enraged and slighting him said I shall ever follow Ram who is steady as the Himalayas and deep as the ocean. Like the Banyan tree he is the shelter of all. He is honourable truthful and auspicious. I shall go to him who is mighty as lion and the foremost of men. Being a jackal do you aspire after a lioness ?

As one cannot touch the rays of the sun so you won't be able to touch me. Ah, you low born wretch ! Since you wish for the darling of Ram you no doubt see before you hundreds of golden trees.¹ You want to pluck the teeth of a hungry lion or the fangs of an angry snake. You want to retire in safety by drinking virulent poison or holding the Mandara hills with two hands. You might as well wish to brush your eyes with needles, or may lick a sharp razor with your tongue. You might

1 A premonition of death.

y to swim the ocean tying a weight round your
 pluck the sun and the moon, to bind burning
 h a piece of cloth, or to walk freely over iron
 he difference between Ram and you is great as
 lion and a jackal, between a streamlet and
 , between nectar and gruel, between gold and
 een sandal paste and mud, between an eagle²
 w, between a peacock and a common water-
 tween a vulture and a swan If you carry me
 n this mighty bowman Ram is alive, you will
 destroyed, as a fly that sucks on clarified

; this gentle Sita began to shake like a plantain

death-like Ravan frowned in anger and putting
 ght said, "Janaki! I am the step-brother o
 Ravan, of formidable might As people fear
 the gods, Gandharvas, *Pishachas*, *Sarpas* and
 afraid of me. Once I fought a duel with
 nd defeated him by my prowess Since then
 t Lanka and is residing in the Kailash moun-
 ave captured by force his *Puspaka* chariot
 go wherever it wills I now journey through
 that chariot Even Indra and other gods fly
 ry sight of my angry face Where I happen to
 the wind blows gently in fear, the sun assumes
 ok, the leaves of the trees cease to flutter and

original the words are Garuda

e, an aquatic bird

the rivers cease to flow. Across the ocean there is my capital Lanka like Amaravati—the heavenly city. It is inhabited by formidable Rakshasas and is surrounded by a white wall. The city gates are made of lapis lazuli gems and its rooms are made of gold. It abounds in horses, elephants and chariots and flourish of trumpets are constantly heard. Its gardens are picturesque and contains a large number of trees of coveted fruits. Sita, if you live with me in Lanka you will not long for human companions and after enjoying heavenly and rare luxury you will never think of Ram—a human being with a brief span of life. You see king Dasarath having banished his weak son has installed his dear one to the throne. Now what will you do with that stupid vagabond deprived of his kingdom? I am the lord of the Rakshasas, I have come to you personally, please receive me. I have been smitten with love please save me. You must not refuse me. As Urvasi repented for felling at Pururava so you will have to rue for disappointing me. Janaki! Ram cannot stand even the force of a single finger of mine in battle. By your good luck I have come to you so yield to me.”

Hearing this Sita boldly replied with her eyes flashing in anger. “Claiming Kuvira as your brother who is adored by all gods how could you engage yourself in such a nefarious act? You are a sensuous brute, and they whose ruler you are will meet with their destruction. It is even possible to live for sometime after carrying off the peerless beauty Sachi the queen of Indra but it is impossible to live in safety by carrying off Ram’s wife. Even if you be immortal by drinking nectar you won’t be saved.”

CHAPTER XX

ABDUCTION OF SITA

powerful Ravan pressed his palms in anger and in his own form and addressing Sita said, "My Sita, You are mad, perhaps you have not heard of my prowess. I can bear the earth on my hands, the ocean, kill Death in battle and pierce the sun and nether world with my sharp arrows. You have sacrificed your beauty and youth, now cast your lot with me who can assume any form at will."

He spoke thus his blue, fiery eyes became red and fiercer. He at once cast off the gentle mask of a lover and assumed his own fierce form, terrible as a storm. Sometime he stood angrily staring at Sita with a head of black hair and resplendent as the sun and said, "My noble lady! If you desire for a husband famous in the three worlds then accept me. I will obey you in every respect. It will be a great boon to you if you serve me all your life. I shall do you no harm. Leave aside your attachment to Rama and be devoted to me. Ah, foolish girl, seeming to be so devoted, could you be attached to that stupid Rama, a brief span of life, who at the words of a woman has fled to this fearful forest in exile, leaving behind his kingdom, friends and relations?"

He spoke wicked and lustful Ravan. As the planet Mars took the place of the star Rohini so he pounced upon Sita

of sweet speech. With his left hand he held her hair and with his right hand he clasped her thighs. The sylvan deities ran away in fear at the sight of Ravan huge as a mountain.

Then came in instantly the magic car drawn by asses with a deep rumbling noise. Ravan got upon the chariot with Sita in his embrace. Sita then in extreme distress called aloud for distant Ram and writhed like a snake to get out of Ravan's hand. But Ravan infuriated with lust soared with her in the sky.

Then Sita cried with grief and remorse began to cry "Ah respectful Lakshman always obedient to the superiors! Dost thou not see that sorcerer Rakshasa is carrying me away? Ala Ram! Thou hast renounced thy happiness and wealth for virtue dost thou not see that Rakshasa is carrying me off by force? O hero! you always chastise the wicked why dost thou not teach this villain a lesson? Evil acts do not always bear their fruits in a moment's time but slowly like the ripening of the grain bring forth by degrees their harvest of woes. You have done this for your own ruin. Alas! the chaste wife of righteous Ram is thus being carried away! Now Kaikeyi's desire will be fulfilled.

"I invoke you O Janasthan and the blooming *Karnikars* to inform Ram without delay that Ravan has stolen away Sita. I ask you, O Godavari resonant with the cries of swans and ducks, to inform Ram without delay that Ravan has carried off Sita. I invoke you all animals and creatures of the forest to tell Ram that Ravan has carried off his darling wife. Even if I am

ay by death from this world Ram will surely
ie by his prowess "

Sita was thus lamenting bitterly she beheld
e prince of birds on the tree At his sight,
sly began, "O worshipful Jatayu, this vicious
is carrying me away in helpless condition
ad devil is cruel, haughty and powerful, more-
armed Do tell Ram and Lakshman about it,
y may learn everything "

CHAPTER XXI

FIGHT WITH JATAYU

at time Jatayu was asleep but hearing these
s sleep was broken and he beheld Ravan and
en that big bird with a huge sharp beak said,
I am truthful and honest, I am Jatayu, the
birds Now, my brother ! It is not proper for
have like this in my presence. Dasarath's son
ie lord of all and he wishes good to everybody,
like Indra and Varuna Whom you intend to
ay is the wife of Ram, honourable Sita It is
proper for a virtuous king to touch another's
cially the wife of a king should always be care-
ctected Give up your low desire concerning
wife ' Another's wife should be protected like
n wife from the (contaminating) touch of a
son. Wise men do not act in such a manner so

that other people can censure them. People follow the example of their king in the pursuit of religion wealth objects of desire and salvation. But lord of the Rakshasas, you are sinful and I wonder how you could acquire such wealth! It is highly difficult to change one's nature but royal splendour cannot long exist in a vicious man's glance. Ravan! Ram has not injured you in any way then why do you commit such wrong to him?

In Janasthan forest Khara and Dushan committed wrong on account of Surpanakha and for that Ram killed them in battle. Now tell me what he has really done? However leave Sita without a moment's delay. As thunderbolt destroyed Vritra that hero will reduce you to ashes by his angry look. You have unwittingly tied a deadly snake with the end of your cloth and put a halter round your neck of which you are ignorant. One should carry only that weight that might not exhaust him or should take only that which he can easily digest. It is not at all good to do such an act which is neither moral nor honourable, but only brings suffering in its wake.

Ravan! I have been ruling over my ancestral kingdom for a long time. I am sixty thousand years old and you are young you are armed and is stationed in a chariot, yet you won't be able to run away with Janaki smoothly. As logical reasonings can not override the immemorial Vedas¹ so you won't be able to take away

1. Mark the passage. Amongst the Hindus the Vedas are always regarded to be the highest authority. In matters of religion preference is always given to Inqutive truths over inferential knowledge.

charioteer striking him with his back. Ravan then lighted on the ground with Janaki on his lap

But Ravan was delighted seeing Jatayu tired on account of his age and he again ascended the chariot with Janaki. Seeing Ravan thus going away with Janaki in delight Jatayu ran after him and obstructed his way saying "Ah you stupid! For the destruction of the Rakshasa race you are carrying away his wife whose arrows are deadly like thunderbolts. You are drinking poison with avidity like a thirsty man. Foolish people, ignorant of the consequences of their acts, soon meet with their ruin like you. You have been ensnared by death, how can you escape? Can that fish escape which has swallowed the hook with a fleshy bait? Ram and Lakshman are exceedingly powerful they won't brook this trespass upon their hermitage. You are a veritable coward and it is nothing but theft, this is not the way in which a brave man acts. Wait and if you be brave be prepared for a fight. You will surely be killed like Khara. Those whose ends are nigh commit such sinful acts. You are doing this for your own destruction. Ah Villain! Who wants to do that whose consequence is evil? Not even the Self born the lord of the three worlds dare do a sinful act."

Saying this Jatayu swooped on Ravan's back as a rider mounts upon an infuriated elephant. Ravan was greatly tormented by the strikings of his back. Ravan shook with anger and taking Janaki on the left side of his lap struck Jatayu with fists. Jatayu thereupon tore off the ten left hands of Ravan but instantly ten new arms

THE RAMAYAN

in their place like venomous snakes emerging from the ant-hill Ravan then left Sita and began to strike with sticks and blows on Jatayu. A hard contest followed and Jatayu fought at the risk of his life for Ram. However, he hastily took up his sword and cut Jatayu's wings into pieces. Jatayu at once fell on the ground and was on the point of death.

Seeing Jatayu lying on the ground bathed in blood, Sita hastened towards him with a distressed heart like a woman who goes near a dying friend, and began to weep by his side.

Ram was extremely delighted seeing that huge bird, like a blue cloud, with yellow breast, fallen like an extinguished forest fire.

CHAPTER XXII

PLIGHT OF SITA

Janaki, with moon-like face, embracing Jatayu on her breast in tears, "Dreams, throbbings of limbs, cries of birds and animals are said to presage happiness and safety for man. Ram ! For me birds and animals are in danger, but you know not what great evil is impending on you. This Jatayu, the prince of birds, came forward to protect me out of compassion, but due to ill luck lies dead on the ground."

Sita then in great fear began to speak, as if addressing Ram by her side, "Alas Ram ! Alas Lakshman ! Save me !"

me to-day" Thus she began to weep like a forlorn creature. Ravan then again darted to capture her

Sita then in fear clung round a tree as a creeper twines round its trunk.

"Just leave it, leave it" repeating these words Ravan came near Sita and Janaki cried aloud calling Ram But Ravan for his death seized her by the hair

At once great commotions were seen in Nature. Intense darkness enveloped everything The sun grew dim and the wind ceased to blow The Grand Sire of creation Brahma seeing this insult on Janaki said Perhaps we shall now succeed. The hermits of the Dandaka forest felt delighted at the prospect of Ravan's death but they were pained to see with their own eyes Sita dragged by the hair

Sita was ever crying for Ram and Lakshman. Ravan, however forcibly took her and soared into the sky. Then Sita of golden hue and clothed in amber robes shone like a lightning in the sky And Ravan looked like a hill on fire on account of her cloth streaming in the air! At that time the petals of red lotuses fragrant with the sweet odour of her body rained on Ravan's laps and her golden cloth streaming in the air shone like crimson clouds of the evening! Alas the sweet countenance of Sita in Ravan's lap appeared sad like a lotus torn from its stalk or like the pale moon coursing its way through a bank of dense, dark clouds. A sweet lily like odour was coming out of her faultless face endowed with a graceful forehead lovely hair beautiful nose, crimson lips, bright pearly teeth and expanded eyes.

beautiful face was bathed in tears, looked pallid, like the moon in daylight, without Ram Janakī was of no hue, and Ravan was dark blue to see and she looked like a golden chain round an elephant's neck, like a lightning in the midst of dark clouds, and the hum of the jingling sounds of her ornament, Ravan seemed to be a rumbling cloud ! The flowers from her crown fell on Ravan's lap and he then shone like the peak girt by a cluster of stars !

After a short time the jewelled anklets, glittering as silver, slipped from her feet, and her shining ornaments bright as flame, one by one, dropped from the crown like a shower of glowing meteors ! Her jewelled necklace, bright as moonshine, slipped from her breast and fell like the stream of the Ganges falling from the

The birds clamoured on shaking boughs, fish and aquatic animals started in water, and the lotus trembled in grief for the sorrow of Janakī. Even lions and tigers ran in anger under the shadow of Sita. The mountains with their peaks, like upraised arms, wailed and shed their fountains of tears !

When the sun grew dim in sorrow ! Ravan was grieved off Ram's Sita, certainly all righteousness had come to an end, thus bemoaned all creatures. A sudden earthquake seized the young deer and the sylvan gods cast looks from their eyes, dim with fright, and shook

Janakī then anxiously looked down for friends again.

and again. Her dark hair hung in the air and tears washed off her Tilak. She swooned for Ram and Lakshman

But cruel Ravan proceeded with her along the sky

CHAPTER XXIII

SITA'S SPEECH

Sita finding Ravan carrying her off through the sky became extremely agitated. Her eyes were red with weeping and rage and being distressed with sorrow pathetically said

"Don't you feel ashamed in carrying me thus like a thief finding me quite helpless and alone? It is through fear that you decoyed my husband to a great distance in the form of that magic deer. Alas! You have also killed Jatayu, the friend who attempted to rescue me. Wonderful is indeed your might, but you are carrying me away (like a trophy) without obtaining me in war. It is a heinous crime to carry away another's wife in a helpless state and are you not ashamed of such a disgraceful act? You seem to be anxious for the reputation of a hero but people will now condemn you for this evil deed. Fie on your heroic boasts, disgrace to your conduct, this will put a stigma on your line. What shall I do since you are running away with me? But wait for a moment and if those two princes meet you, you will not be saved even with your large host. As a bird

bear the slightest touch of fire, so you won't be
 bear their shafts Now if you wish your good
 ve me, or my husband will destroy you in his

You are forcibly carrying me away for a
 us end, but your desire will not be fulfilled I
 ot live long amongst the enemies in absence of my
 husband

n't you understand what is good for you? A
 cts in a perverse manner, when his end is nigh
 u are behaving like that The moribund do not
 ar diets Since you are undaunted when there
 cient cause of fear, it seems that the noose of
 s already round your neck You will surely have
 of rivers of blood, golden trees with flowers of
 id leaves of blue gems, and *Salmali* tree with iron
 and of a forest of sword-like leaves You are
 poison in the form of incurring displeasure of
 You are indeed in the trap of death. He who
 led fourteen thousand Rakshasas with his shafts
 rely kill you for carrying away his dear wife "

thus said many hard things against Ravan but
 overwhelmed with grief and fear she lamented
 y Ravan, however, hied through the sky taking
 stressed young beauty with him

en Janakī found that there was nobody to save
 e saw five apes seated on a hill She threw down
 en cloth of golden hue, her scarf and fine orna-
 thinking that they might inform Ram But Ravan
 ot know anything of it on account of the speed of
 ht.

As soon as those articles were thrown the monkeys with their brownish yellow eyes looked up and saw large eyed Sita weeping bitterly

CHAPTER XXIV

SITA'S LOT

Ravan gradually crossed the Pampa and proceeded towards Lanka. He carried in senseless delight a deadly snake on his lap !

Wicked Ravan after crossing many hills, rivers, lakes and forests with the speed of a flying arrow arrived at the shore of the sea full of sharks, crocodiles and whales. At that time the billows of the ocean lashed themselves into eddies in sorrow and fishes and snakes remained inert in water. Then the celestials talked amongst themselves that Ravan's doom was at hand.

Ravan with Sita then entered the great city of Lanka with its well-laid and spacious roads and people thronging at the city gate. And there, entering his palace he placed distressed Sita as Maydanava kept the demoniac Maya.¹

Placing Sita there Ravan addressing the frightful Rakshasis said Let none, whether male or female see Sita without my permission. Give her instantly what ever she likes, jewels ornaments, gold or apparel. If anybody uses any harsh expression towards her either

1 Magic or illusion here compared to a maid

unwittingly, I shall surely put that person to

lable Ravan after giving these directions to
asis emerged out of his inner court and thought
next At that time his eyes fell upon eight
le, flesh-eating Rakshasas Proud Ravan,
m, highly eulogised their valour and said,
re! Hie with your weapons to Janasthan
oic Khara lived, but depopulated now Live
rlessly depending on your valour There I
a large Rakshasa army, but all have been slain
shafts. Great hostility now exists between
d Ram I shall punish him afterwards and I
sleep till I destroy him On his death I shall
as a poor man feels happy on securing wealth
and give me true informations about Ram
cautiously and try your best to kill him In
attle I have witnessed your valour, it is there-
I send you thither "

those eight Rakshasas greeted Ravan and
eft for Janasthan with that gratifying but
mandate

too felt delighted by confining Sita within

despatching those dreadful Rakshasas to
, Ravan, in his perverse wit, thought him as
with success and he was smitten with lust at
unt thoughts of Sita , thereupon he soon entered
court of his palace to see her

tering the apartment Ravan saw Sita surround-

ed by the Rakshasas, weighed down with sorrow and silently shedding tears with a downcast gaze. At that time she looked miserable like a sinking craft overtaken by storm in the sea or like a doe hounded by the dogs that has been separated from the herd.

Ravan approached her and showed her against her will all the glories of his palace

These mansions and palaces, said Ravan, are full of gems and they rest on crystal gold silver and ivory pillars ornamented with diamond and lapis lazuli. The windows are made of ivory and silver and are protected with golden nets. Their floors are smooth and white. Thousands of beauties and thousands of beautiful birds live there and there are tanks and lakes strewn with lilies."

Then wicked Ravan ascended the magnificent palace with Sita as into a heavenly mansion through golden stairs resounding at every step like a deep rumbling drum and pointed to her the beauties of his castle.

Then to incite cupidity and greed in Sita's mind, he said, Janaki! Besides the young and the old I am ruler over thirty two millions of Rakshasas, and thousands of them speed at my command. Ah, my darling! Thou art dearer to me than life. This life and my kingdom belong to you. I entreat you to be my wife. Be thou the queen over all the beauties that wait on me. Don't disagree. Janaki! Please accede to my words. I am being consumed with the fire of passion, have pity on me.

Look this spacious Lanka girt by the ocean, is

ble even to the gods and demons There is none
 he celestials, Yakshas, Gandharvas and Rishis
 e challenge me My beauty ! Ram is a puny
 he is a man He is weak and has been deprived
 ngdom, and has no conveyance but walks on
 /hat will you do with such poor Ram ? Fix
 ad on me, I am worthy of you in every respect.
 timid beauty ! Youth is ever fleeting, enjoy
 with me and banish all thoughts about seeing
 e can't come here even by riding on his thoughts
 er possible to chain the strong wind of heaven,
 tch hold of the glowing flames of fire ! Janaki !
 ur guard and I see none in the three worlds who
 e you away by force Now, rule over this
 e Lanka, and I shall be your slave The gods
 the creatures of the world will serve you as
 s Take your bath, remove your langour and
 ly for enjoying yourself The sin that you might
 mitted has already been expiated by your exile
 orest, now enjoy the reward of your meritorious
 Here are beautiful garlands and fine ornaments,
 decorate ourselves with them My brother
 had a chariot called *Puspak* It is highly beauti-
 ght like the sun and spacious, and it can travel
 e speed in which thoughts can travel I have
 ed it by my prowess Just get upon it and let us
 rever you like My darling, your face is lovely
 weet lily, but it has been greatly tarnished with
 „

When Ravan said this, Sita covered her face with

the end of her cloth and began to shed tears. She was weighed down with sorrow and deeply absorbed in anxious thoughts.

At this Ravan said "Don't think of shame for this violation. The tie of love with which we two shall be united offends no morality. I do now touch your feet be pleased with me. I am your obedient servant. Let not my prayer prompted by ardent love, be in vain. Ravan hath never before lowered his head to any woman's feet."

Saying this, the lord of Lanka under the spell of death, thought "She is mine."

CHAPTER XXV

FACING THE LION

Then Sita oppressed with sorrow placing a blade of grass between herself and Ravan fearlessly said "Hear me Rakshasa! There was a famous king named Dasarath. He was like a pillar¹ of virtue. Virtuous Ram is his son. He is an Ikshwaku prince. He is my husband and my worshipful deity. He is truthful, famous and possesses mighty arms and large eyes. He with heroic Lakshman will put you to death. Had you attempted to overcome me by force in his presence, surely you would have been slain in battle like Khara.

1 In the original it is bridge."

lakshasas mentioned by you will be harmless
 us snakes before Garuda His golden shafts
 you down as the waves of the Ganges carry
 ks Thou mayst be incapable of being slain
 s or the Asuras, but you won't be able to save
 incurring the enmity of Ram That hero
 you without doubt, you are doomed like an
 d to a sacrificial stake You will be reduced
 y the angry look of Ram, as Cupid was by the
 Rudra He who can bring down the moon
 sky and dry up the sea, will rescue Sita from

Ah, you villain ! Strength, glory and intelli-
 re left you, and for you, Lanka will be a
 city Thou hast torn me from my husband's
 end of this sinful act will never be good
 Ram and Lakshman will humble your pride
 e's end is nigh he becomes careless about every-
 hat fateful time has arrived for you, and for
 ge done to me you will be destroyed with all
 ole I am the devoted wife of Ram and thou
 er be able to touch my person A Chandala
) cannot touch the sacred sacrificial altar
 by mantras and decorated with wreaths. The
 of a swan that sports with her mate amidst
 now can she favour with her glance a water-
 lying amongst weeds and bushes ? This body
 eless to me, you may chain it, or destroy it I
 preserve it any more nor will ever bear the
 unchastity "

, said Sita in great indignation and anger

Hearing these words sufficient to make one's hair stand on their ends, threatening Sita he said "Hear me, Sita! I shall wait for twelve months. If you do not be favourably inclined during this time, then my cooks will cut into pieces to serve with the morning meal.¹

Then turning towards the grim Rakshasis, Ravan said, Listen to me, Rakshasis, humble her pride immediately."

At these words, the Rakshasis surrounded Janaki. Ravan then proceeded a few paces shaking the earth by his heroic treads then turning to them said, "Go take Sita to the Asoka forest and guard her there carefully and sometimes by fright and sometimes by solaces try to bring her gradually under your sway just as a wild elephant is tamed."

Thereupon the Rakshasis took Sita to the Asoka wood. There were a number of *Trees of Desire* bearing fruits and flowers, granting every prayer and the place was resonant with the joyous notes of birds.

Thenceforth Janaki being surrounded by the Rakshasis passed her days as a doe in the midst of tigresses, and was distressed like a deer caught in a trap and knew not a moment's respite. Grimvisaged Rakshasis roared and intimidated her. She was overwhelmed with grief and fear and swooned in thinking of Ram and Lakshman.

1 This constant allusion to cannibalism is a set-off against the astounding material civilisation of Ravan.

CHAPTER XXVI

RAM'S RETURN

meantime Ram after slaying Marich in the deer proceeded towards the hermitage to meet that time, jackals began to howl after him greatly alarmed by their harrowing cries. "something evil has happened since the crying so Perhaps the rovers of night have Janaki Wicked Marich surely intending unto me cried in imitation of my voice. If I heard that cry he would come here leaving, or if Sita heard it then she would send him as the ardent desire of the Rakshasas to kill This was why Marich assuming the form of a deer had decoyed me to such distance and then, "Alas, Lakshman! I am dying" Since my separation I have incurred the hostility of the We have left the cottage and I see evil on all sides Heaven knows whether Sita is here or not"

At the howlings of the jackals Ram became extremely distressed and with a distressed mind hastily proceeded to the cottage The birds and the animals that followed Ram at the time began to cry fearfully on his ear a while Ram saw Lakshman from a distance towards him Both looked anxious and sad, and as Ram met Lakshman he reprimanded Lakshman for leaving Sita alone in that dreadful forest, and taking

Lakshman's left hand in his palm broke forth with a sad but sweet voice. Lakshman! You have done a great wrong in coming here leaving Janaki alone. Heaven knows what dire calamity has befallen her. I see dark portents everywhere surely Sita has been stolen or eaten up by the Rakshasas. Look the animals and the birds are crying in the left so I cannot by any means think that Janaki is safe. Marich decoyed me to a long distance I have killed him somehow and he assumed the form of a Rakshasa at the time of death yet my mind is sad and cheerless. My left eye is throbbing, it seems Sita is no more.

Either somebody has taken her away or she is dead or sh is wandering in distress."

Then Ram finding Lakshman sad and distressed asked him "My boy she who has followed me to the Dandaka forest and whom you have left alone, where is that Janaki now? I have been deprived of my kingdom and am passing a nomadic life in the forest now where is Janaki my companion in sorrow? Without seeing whom I cannot live for a moment where is that Janaki, my help-mate in life? I do not crave for heaven or ruling over the earth in absence of Janaki of dainty waist, of golden hue, like a daughter of gods. Now tell me the truth whether my darling is alive or not? If I die for Sita return to Ayodhya alone mother Kaikeyi will be happy seeing the kingdom quite secured to her son and mother Kausalya, sad and saintly will humbly wait upon them. Lakshman! I shall enter the cottage if Sita is alive, or I shall give up my life if she is dead.

does not greet me with her smile I shall die. Tell me whether she is alive or the Rakshasas have eaten her through your carelessness? Alas! Janakī is young and tender, she can't bear any pain. Surely, she has been greatly distressed by my absence. When Marich cried, 'Alas, Lakshman!' Were you moved by it? Perhaps Janakī, finding the voice like mine, sent you through fear, therefore have you come to see me? However, you have not acted wisely leaving Sita alone in the forest. By this you have given opportunity to the cruel Rakshasas for doing harm. These carnivorous Rakshasas have been greatly grieved at Khara's death, so there is not the least doubt they will kill Sita. Alas! I have fallen in great distress and I know not what to do, perhaps this was my fate in fate."

Ram thus being greatly distressed by anxious thoughts about Sita, hastily proceeded towards the forest, taking Lakshman to task. His countenance grew pale with hunger, thirst and fatigue. He was weighed down with sorrow and breathed heavily.

Ram again sorrowfully asked, "My boy! Since in my confidence I kept Janakī under your charge why do you leave her and come hither? I have been greatly alarmed seeing you coming here alone without me. My left eye and arm are throbbing incessantly and my heart is trembling ever." Lakshman then mournfully replied to sorrowful Ram.

Janakī! I have not come hither leaving Sita of my own will. She despatched me with harsh words, there-

fore I have come to you. Janaki heard you crying aloud "Lakshman! save me." Hearing that cry for your help Janaki was greatly alarmed and on account of her love for you she with tearful eyes urged me again and again to come out. Then to assure her I said "Worshipful lady! I do not see any Rakshasa that can frighten Ram. Be now comforted this voice is not that of Arya but of somebody else. Somebody for some reason has imitated his voice. He can protect even the gods why should he utter this disgraceful cry. Save me? Don't be distressed like a common woman banish your anxiety and be calm. None has yet been born nor will any one in future in the three worlds, who can conquer Ram."

Thereupon Janaki wept and cruelly said Ah you wicked! You are thinking of winning me after Ram's death but that desire of yours will never be fulfilled. You have certainly followed Ram as a spy of Bharat, hence you are not going to his rescue even hearing his cries. You are an enemy in disguise it is therefore, that you are seeking for an opportunity.

At these words of Janaki I was beside myself with rage so I left the cottage without any further delay.

Hearing these words from Lakshman's lips Ram sorrowfully said, Lakshman! You have done wrong by coming here without Sita. You have not acted properly by coming out disobeying my mandate at the angry words of Janaki knowing that I can resist the Rakshasa. I am rather displeased with you. The Rakshasa that decoyed me in the form of a deer has been

by my arrows When he was struck by me, he
 ed the form of a Rakshasa wearing bracelets and
 out in my voice. You have left Janaki hearing
 ty "

CHAPTER XXVII

RAM'S LAMENT

Ram proceeded towards the cottage, he began to
 e on the way and shook in all his limbs He saw
 portents everywhere and repeatedly questioned
 nan about Sita's safety He hastened towards the
 being extremely anxious to meet her Ram
 d the cottage with Lakshman, but found it
 e He then entered the cottage and hied to the
 g ground of Sita, but there was no Sita His
 ood on their ends, and he was overwhelmed with
 Tossing his arms up (in grief) he sought for her
 and thither

cottage without Sita looked like a tank in winter
 of the beauty of the lotus The tree seemed to be
 g, flowers faded, and was bereft of their glory all
 and birds were mute with sorrow The cottage
 quite desolate and disturbed, Kusha grass deer-
 and twigs of Kusha were scattered hither and thi-
 s if the sylvan deities left the place in hurry Ram
 nto bitter lamentations at the sight of that empty

s Janaki been carried away by somebody, or is
 more? Who has been satisfied with her blood?

Has she concealed herself? Has she gone out for gathering fruits and flowers, or has she left for the stream to fetch water?

Then Ram with eyes red (with weeping) and being mad with grief searched all possible places for Janakī but could not find her anywhere. He roamed through hills and forests and came on the banks of rivers and streams, and approaching each object he questioned about Sita.

"O Kadamva! (said he) My darling is quite fond of you tell me if thou hast seen her? Tell me O Bilva hast thou seen her whose breasts are round like thy fruits whose body is soft like tender sprouting leaves, and who was clad in a yellow silken cloth? O Arjuna! You were dear to slim Janakī tell me now whether she is alive or not? O Manuvaka! You look beautiful being covered with leaves and flowers and being twined by creepers you certainly know where is now Janakī whose thighs are smooth as thy bark. Tilaka! Thou art chief among trees, the bees hum round you, and thou art an object of Sita's affection certainly thou knowest where she carries now! O Asoka! You are the destroyer of grief¹ I am senseless with grief for Sita just remove my sorrows by pointing out Sita to me. O Palm! My darling's breast is like your ripe fruits, please tell me if thou hast seen her. Ah O Rose Apple! Tell me if thou hast met that Sita of golden hue. O Karinarka! Being adorned with flowers you look quite beautiful

1. *Saba* means grief. *As ka*—without grief.

gentle Janakī is very fond of you, tell me if thou hast seen her."

Ram thus questioned every tree, such as mango, pomegranate, sandal, sal, *ketaka*, *kadamva*, *vakul*, *kurava*, and came through the forest mad with grief.

Ram then questioned the wild animals of the forest beginning with Sita. Addressing the woodland fawn, Ram

"Ah, Deer! Surely thou knowest gazelle-eyed Sita. Is she now sporting with the does? O Elephant! She has thighs as round as your trunk. No doubt thou hast seen her. O Tiger! Her countenance of my darling is beautiful like the full moon, now tell me without any hesitation if thou hast seen her anywhere.

Ah, my lotus-eyed beauty! Why dost thou fly away, just now I have caught your sight! Why dost thou not reply to my words from behind the tree? Stop! Thou hast grown extremely unkind to me. You never loved me before, then why dost thou slight me now? I have recognised thee by the yellow silken

Ah, you are running away fast. If thou hast any pity for me, please stop, don't go further."

Alas! She is not Sita of winning smile. Certainly voracious Rakshasas have devoured her tearing up her flesh, or she would not have neglected me thus in my

Ah, how lovely was Janakī's nose! How beautiful her teeth! And how tempting were those lips! Her fair countenance, beautiful like the full moon, was in the jaws of the Rakshasas, and when she shrieked only the Rakshasas devoured her soft, fragrant neck.

adorned with golden chain. Her arms, soft as tender leaves and adorned with ornaments and that shook like tendrils, were eaten up by the Rakshasas. Alas ! It is for the Rakshasas that I left young Sita ! Alas ! Although she had friends yet she was helpless ! Lakshman ! Have you met my darling anywhere ? Alas, My love Alas, Sita ! Where hast thou gone ?

Ram thus searched for Sita through the forest. Sometimes he ran fast, sometimes he whirled round and round and became frantic with grief. Thus ceaselessly he paced to and fro through the forest. He could not give up his hope for Sita and he renewed the search with greater vigour.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OCEAN OF GRIEF

Ram long searched for Sita but could not find her anywhere, and with upraised arms burst into bitter cries. 'Brother Lakshman ! Where is Sita ? Where has she gone ? Who has stolen her ? Who has devoured her ? My love ! If you are bent upon playing jokes with me by hiding yourself behind the trees, please refrain from it. I have been greatly distressed by your absence, come quick to my side. The young fawns with whom you used to play are brooding over your absence with tearful eyes. Brother ! I have Janaki no more. I shall not live in her absence. Father from heaven will surely see me die in grief for Sita and he will

am bound by pledge, then why hast thou come before the expiry of the full term (of banishment)? For this fault he will surely take me to task for my less and wilful conduct. Janakī! I am weak, poor and absolutely under your sway. Where hast thou gone? Turn me aside, as fame leaves the deceitful? Don't forsake me, my love, I shall then surely die." Ram thus lamented bitterly but got no sight of

When Lakshman finding Ram immersed in grief and distressed like a stick stuck in deep mud, said in sweet consolatory words, 'O hero! Do not be overwhelmed with grief. Let two of us now carefully search for her. Janakī has not strayed about in the woods of yonder hill. She is hidden with beautiful caves, perhaps she has gone there. Or, she has repaired to the lotus-strewn tank, or to the river abounding in fish and its bank covered with flowers. Let us go now to see how we search for her and to frighten her if she has concealed herself somewhere. O worshipful Sita! Don't be sad, let us now search the whole forest." Then Ram with Lakshman searched for Sita in the valley, in the forest, near the rill, round the tank, but Sita was nowhere.

Then addressing Lakshman said, "My boy! I have not found Sita in the hill." Then Lakshman sorrowfully returned, "As Vishnu rules the world by subduing Vali so you will recover Sita by going through the Dandaka forest." Thereupon, Ram affectionately said, "My boy, I have sought for her in the valley, in the hill, in the cave, near the rill, near lotus-

strewn pool but couldn't find Janaki, dearer than life."

Ram then wept bitterly and became crazed with grief a langour benumbed his limbs, and his understanding became clouded. He heaved long, hot sighs and cried out, "Alas my love!"

Thereupon Lakshman with joined hands tried to console him by various means, but Ram paid no heed to his words and shed an ocean of tears.

Ram then being crazed with grief and love, seemed to behold Sita in his hallucination, and addressing her said "My love! You are much fond of flowers, why hast thou then covered thyself with Asoka blossoms to incite my grief? Your thighs are well-shaped like the plantain tree and you have concealed them in the plantain grove but I see them quite distinctly Janaki! Just for joke you have concealed yourself in the Kamika grove, but what is sport to one is death to another. Please refrain from it it is not consistent with hermitage-life. I now fully realise that you are fond of jests. But come, my large-eyed love, the cottage is desolate without you.

Lakshman! Perhaps the demons have stolen away Sita, or eaten her up, or she could not have forsaken me seeing me thus distressed. These deer with their tears confirm my suspicion. Alas, devoted Janaki! Where hast thou gone? Kaikeyi's desire has been fulfilled. I came out with Sita, but how shall I return alone? People will think me weak and cruel. Janaki's death proves that I have not the least prowess. On my return from the forest when King Janaka will come to enquire

y welfare, how shall I meet him ? He will
 be mortified with grief for not seeing my Sita
 is father for he had not to suffer this sorrow
 me, brother ! How shall I return to Ayodhya

Bharat ? I shall not be happy even in heaven
 Sita I shan't be able to live anyhow without
 go back leaving me in the forest, and after
 ing Bharat tell him that I have given him per-
 o rule over the kingdom After saying this
 t, convey my greetings to Kaikeyi, Sumitria and
 in order I know you never neglect my words,
 length about the destruction of Janaki to my
 and just help her to bear the sorrow "

hman was greatly pained at these lamentations
 his face grew pale and he was extremely
 d in mind

was overwhelmed with grief and finding
 an stricken with sorrow heaved a deep, hot sigh
 l with tears, "My boy ! Perhaps there is not a
 inner than myself on earth Misfortunes after
 nes crush my heart and soul Formerly, I had
 ed many sins through my wayward will, there-
 n reaping the harvest of sorrow now one after

I have been deprived of kingdom, friends and

It is for me that father died All these
 ions crowd in my mind and fill my heart with
 brother ! I forgot every sorrow by coming into
 est with Janaki, but her separation like fire has
 d them again

s ! When the Rakshasas carried her off, how

piteously she shrieked in fear and how bitterly she wept. Her white round breast perfumed with yellow sandal paste was surely bathed in blood. But, Alas ! I am not dead yet ! The countenance over which waved her curled hair from which ever emitted clear silvery accents, has certainly been shorn of its beauty like the moon under the grip of Rahu. Perhaps the blood-thirsty Rakshasas have torn into pieces the sweet neck of my darling adorned with gold chain. I was absent from the cottage and during that time they dragged her by force and she cried like a distressed doe.

Ah how liberal and sweet she was. At the foot of this hill sitting by me, how smilingly she talked to me ! Let us now search for her. She has gone to the Godavari, the best of the streams, for she loved it most, or that lotus-eyed beauty has gone to some pool to gather lotuses or has entered some blossoming wood resonant with the notes of birds.

"Alas ! This is not to be, she won't go anywhere alone out of fear

"O sun ! You see all acts of men you are witness to all truth and falsehood, now tell me where my darling has gone ? O wind you have free access everywhere and are aware of everything of the three worlds tell me whether Sita, the glory of her race, is dead or alive ? Or somebody has stolen her ? Have you seen her on any path ?

Then heroic Lakshman seeing Ram thus stupefied with grief said Arya ! Banish your despair let us be

ing in her search Energetic people are never
 in by arduous task."
 did not pay any heed to the valiant words of
 , but was cast down with sorrow

CHATER XXIX

THE WRATH OF RAM

addressing Lakshman entreatingly said, 'Go
 to Godavari and ascertain whether Janaki has
 to gather the water-lilies"

thus addressed by Ram, Lakshman went to
 stream Godavari, reconnoitering everything
 After a short time he came back and said,
 did not find worshipful Sita in any bathing
 to Godavari I called aloud, but none answered
 I know not where is that sweet lady, the des-
 all sorrows"

then himself went to the Godavari and ques-
 urything near him about Janaki, but none
 lose the fact that Ravan had stolen away Sita
 being frantic with grief again and again asked
 the beasts and the birds, but Godavari made
 he was greatly frightened thinking of terrible

en in despair told Lakshman, "My boy ! The
 does not say anything about Sita Now what
 to king Janaka and how shall I speak of this

loss of Janakī to mother? Janakī assuaged all my sorrows of exile but where is she gone now? In absence of Sita the nights will surely appear too long to me for want of sleep. If there is any chance of getting Sita I shall roam through the whole of Janasthan and the valley of the Mandakīni. Lo! The deer are casting their glances repeatedly on me as if they have something to speak to me."

Then turning to the deer Ram asked with a voice choked with tears "Tell me, ye deer where is Janakī?" Being thus addressed by Ram the deer stood up went towards the south along the route through which Sita had been taken away and as they proceeded they again and again looked up at the sky and again and again looked on Ram.

Lakshman noticed their behaviour and read their silent signals supplying the place of speech. He then said to Ram "O worshipful lord! When you questioned the deer about Janakī they stood up and pointed towards the south let us proceed in that direction we may perchance find Janakī there, or some mementos of her

Ram agreed to Lakshman's proposal and instantly proceeded with him towards the south surveying all round him carefully talking of Janakī on their way. When they were going they came across a bunch of flowers lying on the road-side. At that heroic Ram said to Lakshman "Brother! The flowers I gave to Janakī and which she put on in her tresses, I recognise these to

Perhaps the sun, the wind and the earth
 served them for my benefit "

Then turning to a mountain rill said, "O rill !
 Hast thou seen that beauteous
 this romantic forest ?"

Then after, as a lion roars against an humble
 lion, he broke forth in wrath, "Point out to me
 the place of golden limbs and of golden hue or I shall
 smite your peaks "

The mountain showed no Janaki, and Ram
 said, "O hill, I shall reduce you to ashes with all
 trees and creepers by my arrows, and none with-
 out barren heaps " Then turning to the rill he
 said, "The stream does not speak about my moon-like
 face, I shall dry her up "

While Ram spoke to Lakshman, as if through
 the air he would scorch everything with the fire of
 his arrows. He saw huge foot-prints of the Rakshasas on the
 ground. He also saw the foot-prints of Sita as she ran
 on being chased by the Rakshasas. At a little
 distance he also found a broken bow, broken quivers,
 a broken chariot.

At that sight Ram with great excitement said,
 "Janaki's ornaments are strewn on the ground !
 Look, the ground is
 covered with drops of blood, like the spray of liquid
 surely the rovers of night have devoured her
 after a fierce fight between two giants for her
 There lies snapped, a beautiful bow, inlaid with
 precious stones and gems ! There lies a shattered golden armour,

resplendent as the newly risen sun, adorned with lazulite studs ! There lies a broken staff-umbrella with hundred ribs and decked with wreaths ! Lo ! What large ~~aces~~ with hideous faces and adorned with golden harness have been killed ! What a shining flag-staff bright as flame ! The battle car is broken and lies upside down !

What formidable ~~allows~~ with long large blades ! There lies the charioteer dead, holding the reins and whip in his hands ! Whose are these my boy ? Do they belong to the gods or to the demons ? The foot prints are of a male person, these must be of a rover of night. I have deadly enmity with these cruel villains. They have now either stolen Janaki or eaten her up. Alas ! Righteousness could not protect Sita in the forest and the gods were unkind to me.

My boy ! People set at naught Him who is the Creator Sustainer and Destroyer of the world for His compassion and mercy. Likewise the gods finding me gentle and generous have deemed me weak. My virtues have turned into faults. But henceforth you will behold my change. As the Doomsday-sun rises with fierce glare so my valour will manifest itself for the destruction of all creatures. It will not be a happy day for the Yakshas, the Rakshasas, the Pishachs, the Kinnaras or men. I shall overcast the sky with my arrows and smother all and render them quite inert. I will stop the courses of the planets, screen the moon rob the sun and fire of their glare and cover the world with darkness. I will crush mountains dry oceans, and destroy all vegetation. If the gods do not return to me Sita

or alive, I will destroy the creation in my
 everybody will presently experience my valour
 oy the three worlds with all the Demons,
 and Pishachas in them "

this Ram tightened the bark round his loins
 ed his matted lock. His eyes became red with
 lips began to quiver He looked like Rudra
 ay the demon Tripura

c up the bow from Lakshman's hand and by
 ming deadly arrows burned in rage like a
 ame "Lakshman!" said he, "As none can
 , death, time and accidents, so none will be
 hstand my rage "

ke the Doomsday fire was about to destroy tne
 nd breathing heavily he looked at the stringed

this, Lakshman had not seen such a change in
 ing Ram beside himself with rage, Lakshman
 ed hands and dried up countenance said,
 Formerly, you were gentle, free from evil
 and engaged in doing good to others, and it is
 ing of a man like you to renounce your nature
 ame waits on you, as beauty is inseparable
 moon, light from the sun, motion from the
 on from the wind and forgiveness from the
 herefore, it is not proper for you to destroy
 one's crime

e lies broken a well-equipped battle-car I can
 it is broken The ground also is rent by the
 he horses and covered with drops of blood. A

fierce fight seemed to have taken at this place. This fight was with one warrior and not with many. I do not find the foot prints of an army here. So it is not proper to destroy the world for one's crime. Kings, that are just, out punishment proportionate to the crime. "Arya! You are the shelter and guide of all. Who will think well this outrage on your wife? As the Ritwiga priests cannot do any harm to those who have been initiated by them so the gods, the Gandharvas, the demons, the hills, the rivers won't be able to do any thing unpleasant to you. Now taking the bow in your hand search for the abductor of your wife with me and the hermits. So long we do not find her we shall vigilantly search hills, forests streams, caves, lakes, seas, and the land of the gods and and the Gandharvas. If the gods do not return your wife peacefully then do what you consider best. If you do not get back your Janaki by truce by virtue of your good conduct morality and modesty then destroy everything by your gold-feathered arrow resembling like the thunderbolt.

CHAPTER XXX

RAM PACIFIED

Ram, at this, being smitten with grief began to weep like a helpless creature. Lakshman then entreated him by the feet and for consoling him said O worshipful lord! As the gods obtained nectar so king Dasarath got

er great penance and sacrifice I have heard
 arat that father died for you If you be nervous
 distressed then patience cannot be expected of
 people Please compose yourself Who is not
 by misfortune? It burns one like fire, but is
 inguished In short, this is the destiny of every
 being and it must be admitted that this is
 l by Heaven You see, king Yayatī first went
 en, but subsequently he fell from it The priest
 amily, Vasistha, had hundred sons but he lost
 one day She who is the mother of all, and is
 of all, that mother Earth quakes at times, and
 at are the images of righteousness, and the eyes-
 world, themselves suffer from eclipse. In short,
 creatures and gods also have to suffer misfor-
 It is said that even Indra and other gods are
 to pleasure and pain So do not be over-
 d Even if Janakī be dead you should not
 like an ordinary man Those who are wise like
 can see everything and coolly ascertain the
 bear patiently even in great distress Do thou
 e decide your course of action by your reason
 nt people can apprehend what is good and what
 Hardly any happiness ensues from the per-
 e of such acts that are of uncertain issue, and
 ature is unknown O hero, it is you gave me all
 insels before Who will presume to advise you?
 /rihaspatī is incapable of that Even the gods
 measure thy intelligence which is now clouded
 w You possess both natural and super-natural

powers, now by marshalling them get ready for the destruction of your enemy. What necessity is there for destroying all? destroy him who is the real enemy."

Ram who could easily grasp the pith of everything agreed to Lakshman's reasonable proposal. He subdued his rage and asked Lakshman, "Tell me, brother what shall we do now? Where shall we go? Just think of the means by which we can find out Janaki."

Lakshman replied, "Aiya! This is Janasthan. The place is full of Rakshasas and covered with trees and creepers. Here are hill-fortresses, cleft rocks and caves full of wild animals. The Kinnaras and the Gandharvas live here. Let us carefully search the place. In calamities, a man like you should remain unmoved like a hill undisturbed by the course of wind."

Then Ram with Lakshman began to search for Sita. At one place he found Jatayu lying in a pool of blood. At that sight Ram exclaimed, "My boy! This wretch has devoured my Janaki. Surely it is a Rakshasa, roaming in the forest in the form of a bird. He is now taking rest after devouring Sita. I shall kill it immediately with my sharp arrow."

Saying this Ram angrily fixed a deadly shaft to his bow as if shaking the earth and the sea by his angry treads.

When Ram came near Jatayu vomiting frothy blood piteously said, "Ah hero may you live long! Whom you are searching in the forest like the medicinal herb that may restore life has been robbed by mighty Ravan along with my life. She was defenceless and at

opportunity that wicked villain carried her by force
 he saw that I came forward for her protection
 w me down on the ground These are his bow,
 s, umbrella, car, which I broke down by my kicks,
 lled the charioteer by striking him with my claws
 en I became exhausted he cut off my wings and
 l away Sita through the sky. I have been already
 ed by the Rakshasa, so spare me now "

en Ram got this information of Sita from Jatayu
 ef was doubly increased and throwing aside his
 d arrow he embraced Jatayu rolling on the earth
 gan to weep Then Lakshman fell prostrate by
 e of a thorny path and began to shed tears with
 ong sighs Ram was pained at that sight and softly
 "My boy, loss of kingdom, exile in the forest,
 Sita and death of Jatayu are the decrees of Fate
 eak the truth my bad luck can even burn fire
 If I enter the ocean, through my bad luck it will
 e dry Perhaps there is not a more unlucky man
 world than myself It is due to my ill luck that
 is dead

ving this Ram with filial affection began to touch
 's body and embracing him said, "Tell me, where
 Janaki ?" And thus saying he fell upon the earth

CHATER XXXI

DEATH OF JATAYU

Then Ram darling of the people, said, "Lakshman ! This king of the birds¹ has died for my¹ work. His voice has grown faint his end is nigh and he is staring with dim blank eyes. O Jatayu ! If you have any more power of speech tell me how have you met with this fate ? What harm have I done to Ravan ? Why has he stolen my Sita ? What did Janaki say ? How mighty is Ravan ? How he looks ? What he does and where does he live ?"

Then pious Jatayu replied My boy ! Wicked Ravan creating storm and darkness by magic carried off Sita through the sky When I grew greatly exhausted in the fight, he clipped my wings and flew to the south. O Ram ! The breath of my life is about to flee. I see before me trees of gold having hair resembling the Ushur grass. The moment when Ravan carried away Sita is called Vindya. Whoever takes away anything (dishonestly) on this moment soon meets with his destruction like a fish devouring a hook, and the owner in no time gets back his lost property But Ravan could not know

¹ Bird h cannot be. Was there any tribe known as the *Vikangas* (bird) ? Perhaps they got this appellation for decorating their bodies with feathers, as are seen among the Red Indians. Apparently some of the non-Aryan tribes of India were described as serpents, etc. as the *Nagas*

that time. So don't be overwhelmed with grief . You will soon recover her."

When dying Jatayu was saying this he began to cough blood with particles of mucus . He was the son of Visvasrava, brother of Kuvera," he said but he was choked.

"Speak, speak," cried Ram in great excitement with his hands, but Jatayu expired that very moment. He had rolled on the dust and he lay prostrate on the

When copper-eyed Jatayu, huge as a mountain, died, he broke forth in deep sorrow, "Lakshman ! Who has lived for a long time in the Dandaka forest infested by rakshasas and who was quite energetic inspite of his old age is now lying dead . How inexorable is Death . The helpful king of the birds have met with death for saving Sita . He has died only for me, casting aside his ancestral territory . Virtuous persons are found in all castes and peoples, even amongst the birds . Kind and honest giving shelter to the distressed seeking protection . I have been greatly pained. He is dear to me like king Dasarath . Now gather wood for his cremation, I shall myself set fire to the funeral of him who has died for me . O fatherly Jatayu ! May you attain that high region that is reached by the gods who are not afraid of entering the field of battle, may be attained by the giver of lands, by the performers of sacrifices and by those who keep sacred fire always

alive¹ in the family Ah hero I am myself setting fire to the pyre, may you attain excellent regions hereafter

Saying this Ram placed Jatayu on the funeral pyre as one would do to his kinsman.

Then with Lakshman Ram entered the forest, slaughtered some deer and taking off their meat he offered pindas to Jatayu and fed the birds with them by placing them on soft turfs. Then Ram recited those mantrams that are done by the Brahmans for the attainment of heaven by the dead. He then went to the Godavari with Lakshman and after bathing in the stream performed in due form the watery rites in honour of the dead. Jatayu met with death at the hands of the Rakshas after achieving an arduous and glorious deed and being cremated by saintly Ram he attained heavenly bliss.

After this Ram and Lakshman armed with bows quivers and swords set out in quest of Janaki and proceeded towards the south-west direction.

CHAPTER XXXII

KAVANDHA

They proceeded through a dense dreary forest covered with trees and creepers and unvisited by man. They hurriedly passed through it and entered deep and

1 Something like fire-worship as found in the Zoroastrian creed.

visible Krauncha forest six miles from Janasthan. dark like a deep blue cloud and full of wild
s and birds, and there were flowers of various
colours Issuing from the Krauncha forest, after
nce of six miles, they arrived at the dreadful
of elephants There the woods grew very dense
abounded with ferocious animals There they
deep cave like a fathomless abyss On coming
he cave they espied a loathsome and hedious
ashī whose sight was enough to terrify the weak.
is tall, her belly hanging, teeth sharp, hair dis-
ed and skin rough She eschewing a piece of flesh
near them and embraced Lakshman ahead of the
ying, "Come, let us dally in amorous sports My
is Ayomukhee You are my dear lover I am
re a gem to you Come, my lord, live with me
y for ever in these mountain fastnesses and on the
of the stream "

kshman was greatly enraged at this and cut off her
ears and breast The Rakshashī fled away uttering
le yells in agony

hereafter, they proceeded courageously to a dense

Then gentle Lakshman with joined hands
tfully said to Ram, "My arms are throbbing in-
y, a great anxiety weighs upon my mind I see
portents round me Please be on guard, do not
t my words I apprehend some danger from these
mens But from the cries of the fearful Banyulaka,
think that will attend upon us in fight."

s the two brothers were looking for Sita they heard

a terrific sound. The whole forest seemed to be panic stricken at that. Thereupon Ram instantly took up his sword and proceeded carefully to ascertain its cause. In front of them they found a formidable Rakshasa, with a very spacious chest having no head or neck. His mouth was set on his belly and there was only one eye on his brow. With long lashes, yellow in colour it was dreadful and burning like a flame of fire. He was dark like a cloud and huge as a hill with arms long as a league. His body was covered with bristling hair and his tongue was protruding through his enormous teeth. With terrible roar like a thundering cloud he was feasting upon fierce lions, tigers, bears and other wild animals and birds.

That formidable Rakshasa seeing Ram and Lakshman obstructed their way. Then they stepped aside and began to survey him.

Then the Rakshasa stretching his hands got hold of the two brothers and began to crush them with his might. They were being forcibly dragged. Heroic Ram patient by nature, was not least affected by it, but Lakshman was greatly distressed and sorrowfully said to Ram, "Lo! I am being overpowered by the Rakshasa now run away by offering me as victim. You will perhaps soon get back Janaki and when you get back your kingdom, just remember me occasionally."

Ram answered "My brave brother! Don't be frightened for nothing. A man like you is never overwhelmed by danger."

: Then that cruel Kavandha asked "Who are you?"

your bows and swords and with broad shoulders
 ok like bulls with sharp horns Tell me, what
 ss you have come here for? You have quite
 ntally come within my sight I am hungry, so
 is no escape for you "

m at this said to terrified Lakshman, "We are
 ng misfortune after misfortune, but now we are
 peril of our life. Fate is quite inexorable and
 g is impossible in the decree of fate We too are
 orne down by disaster Even the heroes some-
 give way in fight like bridges of sand "

ving said this Ram stood there in calm courage
 vandha then encircling Ram and Lakshman by
 sked, "Ah Kshatriya boys! Are you standing
 eing me hungry? Ah foolish chaps! Fate has
 u as my food "

en Lakshman to display his valour told Ram,
 ' This low Rakshasa will soon seize us Let us
 uthout delay cut off his two huge arms with
 I see his strength lies in his arms It is igno-
 for a Kshatriya to kill one who cannot use arms
 nceless like an animal brought for sacrifice We
 not, therefore, put an end to the life of this
 sa."

uring these words Kavandha flew into rage He
 his mouth and tried to devour them At that
 t Ram cut off his right arm and Lakshman his
 avandha fell down by uttering a terrific yell.
 ed who they were. Thereupon Lakshman said,
 shasa! He is heroic Ram of the Ikshwaku line,

and I am his younger brother. Mother stood in the way of his installation to the throne and sent him to exile. This is why god like mighty Ram is residing in the forest with me and his wife. In this state when he was absent a Rakshasa has carried off his wife. We are out in search of her. Now tell me who are you with your flaming mouth set in the chest. Why do you roam about as a headless monster?"

Kavandha then remembered the words of Indra and then cheerfully welcoming them said. O hero! Fortunately I have met you. Fortunately my arms have been cut. Let me now tell you through my insolence I have undergone this hideous metamorphosis.

"Ram! I was beautiful like Indra and like the sun and the moon but I used to frighten the Rishis by assuming the form of a formidable Rakshasa. Once upon a time a hermit, named Schulashira was gathering wild fruits and roots. I snatched them from him assuming this form. At this the Rishi was greatly enraged and he cursed me saying that henceforth I would be as cruel and hideous as the assumed guise.

"Then I entreated him again and again for the expiation of that curse. Then the Rishi said, When Ram will cut off your arm and burn you in the forest you will get back your former beautiful form.

Lakshman! I am Danu, the son of Sri Danava. The form that you see is due to the curse of Indra. Once I performed great penance, thereupon Grand Sire Brahma granted me long life as a boon and I grew proud in consequence of that. I thought since I was to

what Indra would do to me Being elated
 thought, I challenged Indra in a fight. Indra
 underbolt pressed inside my body my head
 I prayed humbly for life so he did not kill
 d, 'Let Brahma's wish be fulfilled' I then
 have shattered my thighs and head by the
 , how am I to live henceforward?' Indra
 o long arms and a mouth with sharp teeth to
 I seize wild animals with my long arms and
 Indra at that time said that when in a fight
 lakshman would cut off your two arms, you
 attain heaven "

I used to take everything that I could seize
 and I thought that once Ram and Laksh-
 man come within my clutch and they would
 body O hero ! Thou art that Ram. May
 you Sthulashira told me that none but
 be able to destroy me and that has come to
 low set fire to my body, I shall give you good
 show you a helping friend "

then said, "Kavandha ! I was out with
 in Janasthan and during our absence Ravan
 way my chaste wife Sita. I have only come
 e, name of that wicked villain but I do not
 ing about his residence, age, prowess or how
 We are now roaming about in helpless state,
 , some favour O hero ! We shall dig a big
 and burn your corpse by collecting dry wood
 the trunks of the elephants Tell me who

has carried away my Sita. If you know the truth do me the favour by stating it."

Thereupon Kavandha answered Prince! I don't know Janaki I have not that supernatural power of knowledge now. I shall resume my former shape after death and shall then tell you who knows about her. I have lost that divine foresight on account of my curse, so before I am reduced to ashes, I won't be able to know which formidable Rakshasa has carried off your wife. So you first duly cremate my body before the sun goes down. I shall then name to you a person who knows everything about the Rakshasas. Make friendship with him. He is just and you will get great help from him in your present circumstance. There is nothing unknown to him in the three worlds. Once upon a time for some reason he actually travelled through the three worlds.

Then a funeral pyre was prepared in a hollow of the hill. Lakshman set fire to it and fire began to burn that huge fatty body like a lump of butter.

After a while Kavandha cheerfully rose from the flame. He was clad in a white piece of cloth, his body was decked with beautiful ornaments and an excellent garland hung from his neck. He got upon an effulgent car yoked with swans and ascending the sky said

"Ram! Listen to me as to how you will get back Sita. On earth there are only six ways of attaining one's object as peace and war¹. One who is in distress should

1 The six political means of attaining object :—*Sandhi*—peace ;
Vigraha—war *Yan*—military expedition *Ashva*—halting

another like him Now with Lakshman you are distressed and have been suffering from the loss of Sita. So in these circumstances make friendship with one who is equally distressed like you Besides this, see any other means of your attaining success

! There is a mighty monkey named Sugriva begotten by the sun unto the wife of Riksharaj, son of Indra, is his brother He has driven Vala from the kingdom. He is now dwelling on Panchamukha hill on the bank of the Pampa along with other monkeys He is modest, intelligent, gentle, effulgent and of firm determination He will aid and help to you in your quest for Sita overwhelmed with grief Fate is inexorable, so it must be So leave this place quickly To Sugriva, evil immediately contract friendship in the presence of sacred fire Don't despise him because he is a Rakshasa. He is greatful, helping and capable of assuming different forms at will You will get great aid from him, or at least he will never be indifferent to your work He now roams near the bank of the Pampa in fear of Vali who has driven him away

! Go now and placing thy weapons in the presence of attesting fire in solemn truth, contract friendship with that denizen of the forest He knows nothing about the Rakshasas and nothing in the three worlds is unknown to him So long the sun shines, he

will search for Sita at every possible place, hills dales, caves and streams with his Vanara followers. He will send great Vanara chiefs in different directions and search for Sita in Ravana's palace bewailing for you. Whether Janaki be on the peak of the Sumeru or in the nether region under the earth, this lord of the Vanaras will kill that villain and give back your Sita to you.

CHAPTER XXXIII

FURTHER DIRECTIONS

After telling Ram the means of finding out Sita the Kavandha gave directions about the route saying "Ram! This is the best path that leads to the place abounding in rose-apples, mangoes figs, Jakas, Tridukas, Karnikaras blue Asokas, red Sandals, Kadamvas Tilakas, Karavirs Naktamals, Nagkesharas, Agnimukh yas and Mandar trees. Eat their sweet delicious fruits either by climbing upon the trees or by bending their boughs. After passing through that wood you will reach another forest like the heavenly garden Nandan. All the seasons exist there as in Chaitrarath—the garden of Kuvera

Thus passing through hills and dales you will arrive at the bank of the Pampa lake. It is free from gravel and weeds, is strewn with sand, so not at all slippery. It is resonant with the notes of aquatic birds and swans. They are not afraid of man since they do not know anything like slaughter. You feed upon those fatty

up as a lump of butter. There are excellent
 at lake as Rohit and Chakratandu. Devoted
 will kill them with shafts and after removing
 and fins will roast them for you. The water
 pa is clear like crystal, sweet, scented with
 nce of lotuses and very pleasant to drink
 will fetch it for your drink in cups made of
 Huge boars live there in mountain-caves
 llow like bulls after quenching their thirst
 I will feel consoled at the sight of the Pampa
 ktamals, red and white lotuses bloom there
 ne to gather those flowers. Those flowers
 er. It was the residence of the disciples of
 Drops of perspiration fallen from them while
 uts for their preceptor have bloomed into
 ey are now dead, but still there lives a pious
 Savari. This pious woman was their servant
 vine, adorable of all, Savari will attain
 our sight.

You will find the hermitage of Matanga
 bank of the Pampa. Wild elephants do not
 the threshold of his asylum. You will feel
 at romantic place. The Rishyamukha hill is
 istance from the Pampa. It abounds in
 s of flower-trees and being surrounded by
 s nobody dares to cull flowers from them
 formerly created by Brahma. Wonderful
 of gift. Whatever riches one may seem to
 dream sleeping over this mountain, on his
 a sleep he finds actually possessing them!

If any sinful person climbs upon it the Rakshasas beat him instantly. The noise of the young elephants sporting in the Pampa is constantly heard in that hill. Tigers, bears and gentle Rurus of sapphire hue are found there. There is an immense cave in that hill. It is very difficult to enter it. You will find a beautiful tank in front of that cave. Its banks are adorned with various kinds of fruit and flower trees. Pious Sugriva with other Vanaras lives there and sometimes resides on the peak of the hill.

Under the sky Havandha with a bright garland shone like a sun and as he was about to ascend Ram and Lakshman said: "Go to the blissful heaven."

Havandha replied: "Go to your own business and make friendship with Sugriva."

CHAPTER XXXIV

SAVARI

Ram and Lakshman then followed the route indicated by Havandha for meeting Sugriva.

They proceeded towards the west and found various trees heavy with sweet fruits on the hill. The sun set on their way and they passed the night on the hill. On the morning they arrived at the western bank of the Pampa. There was situated the romantic hermitage of pious Savari covered with various trees.

Seeing that they approached Savari. As soon as

THE RAMAYAN

When she saw them she stood up with folded hands, with great reverence bowed to them and offered them water to wash their feet.

When addressing Savarî said, "O venerable hermits! What a speech! Have you conquered all the passions? Do you stand in the way of penance? Are you diligent in your ascetic rites? Have you mastered your anger? Don't you practise control over your senses? Do you enjoy mental felicity? Are not your vows observed? Has the service towards the Lord been consummated with success?"

Savarî of accomplished penance, approved by the hermits, came forward and said

"Seeing you to-day I feel that my penance has reached its consummation, blessed is my birth and my devotion to superiors. I shall attain liberation worshipping you to-day. Since you have

been so kind by your gentle look, I shall surely attain liberation by your grace. All the ascetics whom we have repaired in excellent chariots from all regions to the heavenly region as soon as you

will come on the Chitrakuta hill. Those virtuous hermits at the time of their departure told me that one day come to this sacred asylum, and receive Ram and Lakshman with due rites.

Following those words of the hermits I have brought garlands and flowers for you from the bank of

Thereupon Ram said to Savari cognizant of the past present and future I have heard from Danu about the glory of the ascetics I wish to witness, with my own eyes, your attainment of that heavenly bliss.

Savari then said Ram! Look, there the vast Matanga forest full of beasts and birds, deep as a dense cloud In this forest the holy hermits cast off their sacred bodies into burning flame by uttering Mantras There stands the altar Pratyakshasthali there my reverend spiritual guides used to collect flowers, their hands shaking from fatigue. Behold! The altar is even now surrounded by the halo of their spiritual glory They could not travel on account of their langour due to continual fasting. Look there the seven seas appeared as soon as they were invoked The barks that used to hang after bath on the branches of the trees for drying have not dried as yet! The lotuses and other flowers with which they used to worship the gods have not yet withered. Ram! Thou hast seen all, heard all, permit me now to cast off my body I shall go to them to whom belongs this hermitage and whom I used to serve.

Ram was greatly pleased at these pious words of Savari "It is indeed wonderful" exclaimed Ram My noble lady! You have shown me due honour Go now wherever you like to repair"

Then infirm Savari with matted locks and clad in deer skin with the permission of Ram cast her body into *burning flame*.¹

1 The world-renowned scientist Dr. Mitchnikoff in his "Nature of Man" has devoted a long chapter about the universal fear of death

rose from the flame with an effulgent
 like fire. Celestial ornaments and jewels
 body and a sweet scented heavenly garland
 her neck. Being robed in heavenly apparel
 exceedingly beautiful and illumined the
 e by the halo of her glory like the glare of
 Then through *Samadhi* she reached that
 on inhabited by great saints

c. 16

CHAPTER XXXV

THE JOURNEY

Savari ascended heaven by virtue of her
 nance, Ram thought about the great super-
 power of the saints, and after some time address-
 man said

boy ! This asylum abounds in deer, tigers and
 imals , various kinds of birds are chirping here
 place abounds in wonderful things. I have
 these miracles with my own eyes and after
 in the waters of the seven seas have performed

has shown that old people are more afraid of death than
 ones (of course, there are enough reasons for it), but in
 idia we find a glorious exception to this where a man
 himself for death and when the supreme moment came, he
 s ghost in cheerful resignation. At the fag end of life a
 ht sometimes cast off his mortal frame by the *yogic* concen-
 his soul. This is not suicide, but a glorious resurrection
 . It is like the rising of the phoenix, the self-begotten
 perpetuating bird, in new splendour from the ashes !

in due form the watery rites to the manes of the ancestors. I think my misfortunes have ended and for this my mind seems to be filled with delight. Let us now repair to the romantic Pampa.

"The Rushyamukha hill is at a little distance from the Pampa. There Sugriva the son of Surya resides with four other Vanaras in fear of Vali. I am eager to meet him soon for the quest of Janaki is entirely in his hands.

Lakshman replied "I am too desirous to see the Pampa. Let us, therefore start without any further delay."

Ram then set out with Lakshman and proceeded towards the distant flowing Pampa surveying all round him the tall flowery trees, the curlews peacocks parrots wood peckers, crying in the dale and flying through brakes. They after some time, arrived at Matangasara a part of the Pampa¹ and from a distance witnessed the Pampa. The stream of the Pampa was beautiful to see. Its crystal water strewn with blooming lotuses its banks covered with soft sands and fringed with green vegetation greeted their eyes. Fishes were swimming in its deep water displaying their silvery fins, and tortones were floating upon the surface of the stream. Part of the lake was copper red with crimson lotuses part of it was white with lilies and part of it blue with the azure blossoms of kuvalaya.² On account

1 The Sanskrit commentator of the epic says Pampa to be the name both of a lake and a rill that flows into the lake

2 Blue lotus.

THE RAMAYAN

various hues the stream appeared like a variegated t-cover of an elephant. Its banks were girt with long Asokas, Punnagas, Vakulas, Tilakas and a trees, and there stood picturesque gardens, the creepers clung round the trees like a darling's ce. Its flowery valley was ever haunted by the as, Gandharvas, Uragas, Yakshas and the isas

n at the sight of the beautiful Pampa was smitten ief for Sita, and addressing Lakshman said .

kshman ! This lovely stream of Pampa, being th various blossoming trees and lovely creepers, s-like a beauty decked in jewels. There stands bank the Rishyamukha tinged with the hues of s metals as mentioned by Kabandha. There Sugriva the son of the great Riksharaja. Now, go to him without delay. I cannot bear the of Sita's separation any more. O Lakshman ! hall I live without Sita ? I have been deprived kingdom, I am really poorly, and Sita is my wife. I know not whether Janaki will survive this on or not "

is lamenting Ram, smitten with sorrow and love , proceeded slowly towards the beautiful Pampa, with lotuses, and adorned on all sides by flowery resounding with the sweet notes of various birds

THE END OF THE ARANYA KANDAM

